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4 January 1985

Near East/South Asia Report

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4 January 1985

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VARIOUS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARAB ECONOMIC COOPERATION REVIEWED

Tunis AL-SABAH in Arabic 27 Sep 84 p 5

[Article by 'Abd-al-Latif al-Furati and Sarah 'Abd-al-Maqsud: "A Conversation with Dr 'Abd-al-Muhsin Zalzalalah: The Arab Economic and Social Council Meeting Is a New Opportunity for Promoting Arab Cooperation"]

[Text] Last month the Arab Economic Council held a session in Amman. This session came 4 years after the Amman economic conference. In order to follow up on the important resolutions of the Amman summit and to learn about the activities of the session, we held a conversation with the well known economic expert Dr 'Abd-al-Muhsin Zalzalalah, assistant secretary general of the League of Arab States in charge of economic affairs. We reproduce it as follows:

Question: Could you talk to us about the activities of the Economic and Social Council session and their degree of importance?

Answer: The session was marked by a special importance, since it was held in the place from which the resolutions of the first Arab economic summit were launched. It was an occasion to review what has been achieved in 4 years and to learn the reasons why some resolutions have not been carried out.

The session was distinguished by depth of analysis and profound investigation into the quantitative and descriptive phenomena which often dominate ordinary economic reports. The council reviewed the unified economic report, a scientific undertaking prepared by the Arab League which revealed many economic facts and developments in the Arab and foreign worlds. The council discussed this report in a spirit of national responsibility, and there was a feeling that economic challenges must be confronted by Arab cooperation since it is not fruitful to confront them on an isolated basis.

[Question] What is the agenda of the session?

[Answer] The agenda included two main focal points:

1. International economic developments and the Arab position regarding those.

2. Arab economic developments and the role of joint Arab action organizations in strengthening the development and integration process. Perhaps the convening of this session a short time before the meeting of the World Bank and the United Nations Fund, which normally discuss issues that have a direct effect on developing countries, helped give concrete form to a unified Arab position. In this regard the Tunisian minister will take charge of expressing the viewpoint of the Arab countries, which is the viewpoint of the countries of the Third World in the United Nations.

Question: What is your analysis of the economic situation in the period of the eighties?

Answer: The beginning of the eighties has offered further proof of the danger of the traditional theories which bore the good news that revival was coming in the third world, since what we have witnessed is the opposite, because the beginning of the eighties witnessed the revival of the United States of America, then this revival gradually and slowly progressed toward Western Europe, while the crisis of development in the developing countries became aggravated and their economic problems increased, as their balance of payments deficits became aggravated, their trade declined, and the growth in gross national product recorded a negative trend, not to speak of unemployment. The international interest in loans is manifesting itself suddenly at a time when some debtor countries have expressed their inability to meet their commitments. This is something which the Western institutions have feared will expose them, and along with that the foundations of the international banking system, to collapse. The debts of the developing countries have come to more than \$840 billion, and the debts which must be repaid in the case of some countries come to between 60 and 70 percent of their exports. In the session, we had to discuss the reasons for international indebtedness and its roots, which extend to the problem of development in the context of the policies carried out by the advanced industrial countries, which try to deal with their present crisis through policies of monetary contraction and the pursuit of discriminatory protective policies vis-a-vis the developing countries. The international organizations must offer development assistance to the developing countries by making lending conditions easier, setting out the bases of international monetary stability and making the conditions of borrowing easier in terms of the interest rate and repayment period, while what has happened is that the developing countries, because of tight conditions, have been compelled to follow a policy of contraction and have removed subsidies on some basic requirements, which has threatened social peace.

The Arab countries appealed to the Western countries to put their policies in harmony with the slogans they raise, because we find schizophrenic principles in Western policy. On the one hand they call for freedom of trade, but they pursue a restrictive policy. therefore, the Economic Council has stated that the policies of the Western countries must be put in harmony with the slogans of raising the discriminatory restrictions on imports from the developing countries. In addition to that, the Arab countries have faced two problems:

These are embodied in the oil crisis and the international market, which shifted in the beginning of the eighties to a depressed market, after supply began to exceed demand as a result of plans which the federation of consumers had made. For the first time, we faced in the eighties a decline in oil prices and in the volume of demand, and consequently a decline in oil revenues, which led to a drop in financial revenues in many Arab countries. It is necessary to pause briefly until they can enter into a new era of guidance, rationality and planning. Although some people have started to talk of the beginning of the end of the era of oil, I believe that oil will continue to play a basic role in the world economy if we are able properly to play the economic and political game, because the Arab nation contains important oil reserves which are exploited at modest cost. One can determine that Arab oil's role will remain extremely important in the coming four decades.

In the last 2 years, we witnessed a slowdown in the development process in the Arab nation because of the drop in oil revenues. The growth rate dropped in Arab countries and, as a result of the aggravation of budget deficits of some Arab countries, they were compelled to borrow on the international market. The volume of this borrowing came to more than \$100 billion, and 90 percent of these loans were in dollars, whose interest rates are experiencing a rise that impedes the development process.

These phenomena have had some positive features, since they have opened the eyes of Arab officials to the importance of concentrating on agriculture, even if at high cost, by virtue of the political and economic necessity which self-sufficiency in food represents. The governments have called for special protection to be given to domestic industries and local products through successful Arab cooperation, especially since in the last 2 years we have experienced two types of measures which have been the object of officials' interest:

1. The aggravation of protectionist policies against our domestic products, such as petrochemicals, citrus and textiles.
2. The sweeping of Arab markets with international products, threatening domestic and Arab products. The council paused a long time to consider these two points.

Question: Did the council offer some recommendations or proposals to keep these problems within bounds?

Answer: Yes, the council offered a number of recommendations to assert preferential treatment for Arab goods, because that is the life raft for fledgling Arab industries, especially since the Arab market is the natural place for marketing these products. We feel that the analysis is credible.

Question: Now that 4 years have elapsed since the convening of the Amman economic summit, what has been achieved in the realm of joint Arab action? Have all countries presented documents of ratification?

Answer: The economic action charter has been ratified by all the Arab countries at the ministerial level. The strategy of economic action is a

document which spells out the shares and priorities of common Arab action for us. I do not believe that ceremonial ratification means execution or common commitment, although the countries which have submitted ratification documents are 12 in number, mostly Arab capital-exporting countries, the execution of resolutions on debts are the responsibility of all Arab countries and the Arab countries must create the suitable investment climate to promote feasible development projects and offer investment opportunities for Arab money.

We have not abandoned the matter at the point where legislation is issued; rather, we have brought Arab investors together at al-Ta'if and Casablanca, and in the near future in Kuwait. The objective is for us to present to Arab investors a number of projects whose studies have been completed by the competent Arab organizations and to show the incentives the Arab countries offer to Arab investors to confirm the feasibility of investment, because the safe place and real home for Arab money is inside the Arab nation.

Question: Arab labor is facing numerous obstacles in the Arab nation, although it is surplus on the one hand and desired on the other, while the importation of Asian labor is continuing. Doesn't that conflict with the agreement on the flow of Arab manpower in the Arab nation?

Answer: The national action charter contains the strategy, and the agreement on facilitating trade contains stipulations which express the Arab countries' commitments to grant preference to Arab workers and technicians. There is a supply and abundance of Arab activity, and there is demand for different types of Arab labor.

After the infrastructure was built in the Gulf countries, interest began to be concentrated on improving the quality of existing projects and strengthening their foundations. This requires labor which is not at the same level as before and has a specific kind of skill. Perhaps it is the responsibility of the Arab Labor Organization to prepare training programs for the required types of skills, so that the Arab countries can absorb them. Today we have 4.5 million Arab workers crossing national boundaries and taking part in the development process, and their annual revenues are greater than \$5 billion.

Question: At a time when some European countries are intending collectively to expel Arab workers, Arab countries are offering these countries aid to save their economies. Isn't there a contradiction in this?

Answer: One cannot connect the two issues. On the one hand there is the growth of our economic relations with a number of industrial countries; sometimes an Arab citizen will wonder to what extent this orientation is in harmony with the resolutions of the Arab economic summit. The Arab League has avoided no opportunity to point out that the takeoff point in our dealings with the outer world must be based on an accurate, objective evaluation of the extent to which the other party is committed to positions which take our interests into consideration. Perhaps Europe is betting on the weakness of the Arab situation and our failure to take common positions, which has caused us to lose much of our credibility, while we have economic and

strategic elements at hand which can be used to support our causes. During this session we have not issued sonorous declarations or warnings; rather, we have restricted ourselves to asserting respect for our legislation.

This alone is an adequate warning to the other side. Here I am referring to the weapon of the embargo which constitutes a Western innovation. When we ourselves apply it, we are accused of following a discriminatory policy, while the embargo is a defensive weapon and is legislation that has been endorsed by the United Nations and our domestic laws. Anyone who wants to deal with us must respect our legislation and our interests.

[Question] How do you view the establishment of a free trade zone in Israel in cooperation with America?

Answer: During this period specifically, America has been trying to establish a free trade zone in Israel in the context of strategic cooperation between the two of them in the area. It is well known that the free trade zone is based on three foundations:

1. The non-traditional free zone, founded on the provision of goods, services and insurance.
2. The establishment of joint projects in the military field.
3. The transfer of technology.

These projects represent the greatest danger to the Arab nation, because American-Israeli economic integration requires the restructuring and reorganization of the Israeli economy by concentrating on a number of industrial branches, especially the military, petrochemical and electronic industries. The goal of these three branches is to strike out at the Arab economy, and we must realize the seriousness of the acts to which we are being exposed by committing ourselves to boycott and applying it with determination throughout the Arab nation so that the Western party will be aware that we carry out what we say, especially since our trade with the United States accounts for \$18 billion and our imports \$15 billion. However, this matter is related not just to government will but also to the media, so that the citizens may be enlightened and made to feel the danger of the challenges the region is facing and so that public opinion can exert its pressures on governments, since ultimately we have no ally except ourselves.

Question: Could you give us some clarification regarding the international agreement to exploit the high seas?

Answer: The developing countries managed to take part in formulating the international agreement on the seas and to obtain some concessions, the most important of which is the chance to submit applications to register themselves as investors and come forth and obtain positions in the high seas. Acquiring a position in the high seas will entail guaranteeing new resources for us for the future generations, most important of which are manganese and other rare minerals.

Out of the league council's belief in the importance and vital nature of the plan, it has asserted the need to establish a private Arab company, although the conditions of international power and the law of the seas make it difficult to establish that through an isolated body. These conditions require that the body presenting the application have spent at least \$30 million in past years on the same activity. Investment in this field is costly, but it is feasible and profitable, and a school for graduating future personnel. The council discussed this subject in three sessions, and will meet next November to submit the application to the competent bodies.

Question: What places have been chosen?

Answer: The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans have been covered by Western countries, the socialist group, India, Korea and Yugoslavia, and preliminary information is concentrated on the choice of an important location near the coast of Somalia and the Seychelles Islands or in the Indian Ocean basin area. What is needed is to send an exploratory mission to produce samples and analyze them in order to ascertain the preferability of the site and submit an application to the international authorities.

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IRANIAN ROLE IN PROLONGING WAR REVIEWED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 6 Oct 84 p 24

[Article by Diyab Nabhan: "Iraq: While the Iranian Regime Clings to Military Methods, Iraqi Strikes against Economic Installations [Shift] from Warning to Destruction"]

[Text] Forty-nine months after it broke out, the Iraqi-Iranian war has entered a new turning point and a new stage, the most important characteristic of which is the Iranian adherence to resolving the struggle with Iraq by military means. The Iraqi response to this adherence has been to invite the Iranians [in their] belligerence and challenge to carry out their threats to attack Iraqi territory.

The Iraqi response was voiced by President Saddam Husayn, who on Thursday 27 September spoke to a group of Egyptians upon receiving them at the republican palace in Baghdad, when he said, "If the Iranians want to fight, we are for it, and they will face a situation they have not faced in all the stages of the fighting that have gone by."

Hashemi Rafsanjani, chairman of the Iranian parliament and protagonist of the civil war game, and other Iranian officials have recently escalated their threats and intensified their extremist position regarding the continuation of the war, which is not founded on a material or realistic basis. Observers unanimously agree with this, stressing that Iran's arms purchases recently are almost enough to provide arms for the guard forces which are waging a harsh war in the Iranian provinces against the armed opposition to the regime, which set its military action in motion recently, after having organized an extensive protest against the war on the fourth anniversary of its outbreak. That is happening at a time when the Iranian army is experiencing difficult circumstances in purchasing arms and its ranks are being dominated by a state of frustration and grumbling which in any case will not enable it to put the threats the Iranian officials are uttering against Iraq into practice.

In addition to that, Iranian military circles realize that any attempt to attack Iraq's borders, which Iranian officials aspire to do, will be in effect a disaster which will afflict the Iranian army and perhaps lead to its

destruction and annihilation, as confirmed by more than one observer who read Iraqi military communique 1604 issued last Sunday evening (30 September 1984), which observers believe bore something new this time, represented by Iraq's use of the air force whose effectiveness had been limited, or almost suspended, in the past period, as Iraqi helicopters continued their strikes against the concentrations and positions of the Iranian forces along the Iranian flanks facing the Iraqi lines of fire. The restoration by the Iraqi air force of its effectiveness and distinctive power, now that it has more than 400 fighter planes, in the arena of combat indicates that Iraq is exercising more pressure on the Iranian forces and robbing them of any opportunity to mobilize or assume a combat position. The second warning strike the Iraqi air force directed against the petrochemical complex in Bandar Khomeyni lies within this framework. The Iraqi newspaper AL-THAWRAH, organ of the Ba'th Party, stressed, in an editorial it carried on Sunday 30 September 1984, that the two warning strikes against the installations on Kharg Island and the petrochemical complex, and the recent warning strike against the same complex, indicate an obvious qualitative shift in the style of Iraq's response and also give concrete form to Iraq's decision to push back the rulers of Tehran and force them to abandon the war platform.

In addition to that, observers remind people of Iraq's previous declaration that it had a plan at hand to strike out at Iranian economic and strategic installations and that more than 80 important targets in Iran would be destroyed if need so required. An informed political source informed AL-TADAMUN that the warning strikes on Iraq's part expressed Iraq's loss of patience over the Iranian threats, which are not founded on any realistic basis, now that 4 years of violent combat have proved that the military means Iran is adhering to will not be adequate to decide the struggle with Iraq and that peace and the approach of negotiations are the practical means for resolving the struggle between the two countries in a just manner which will guarantee each party its rights, especially since estimates by military experts and analysts confirm that it is not in Iran's power to carry out any extensive military offensives along the lines of the offensives it carried out in the summer of 1983, ending with the battles east of Basrah and Hawr al-Huwayzah, which took place last February.

The same source added that Iran, in the face of this situation, might also resort to limited military offensives against specific areas to compensate for the final offensive which Iranian officials have talked much about, although it has not occurred, in the desire to divert Iranians from the fiascos the Iranian government programs have suffered from in all fields. This disaster has compelled Ayatollah Khomeyni to align himself with the bazaar merchants at the expense of the deprived groups and to work his way around the law bearing on the nationalization of foreign trade through his directives in this regard.

In addition, observers unanimously agree that the Iranian regime is facing a difficult predicament, since it has to choose between continuing the war in the context of a bad military situation and agreeing to peace, abandoning the undeclared conditions it is still adhering to. Although the Iranian tone of extremism indicates that the margin of peace is still narrow and limited, although the popularity of the regime has dropped to its lowest point among

Iranian circles, it still occupies priority in the regime's programs. Above and beyond that, it has turned into a cog in the game of the power struggle among Iranian officials. Iraq's strikes against the economic installations and their shift from the level of a warning to that of destruction has expanded the margin for peace in Iranian thinking, if only in accordance with the proverb which holds "The threat to your brother is a reality and not an imaginary one."

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EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS' ROLE IN MEDIATING MIDEAST SOLUTIONS REVIEWED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 13 Oct 84 p 28

[Article by Marwan al-Mahayini: "A New Role for International Socialism in Resolving the Region's Crisis"]

[Text] Last week, as is its custom, Syria celebrated the anniversary of the October war. At the central celebration held on this occasion, Zuhayr Musharriqah, the vice president, sharply criticized the Amman decree on the resumption of relations with Cairo. In addition, the campaign of Syrian condemnation of this decree continued.

On the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the signing of the Syrian-Soviet treaty of friendship and cooperation, President al-Asad and the leaders of the Soviet Union exchanged congratulatory telegrams. In his telegram, the Syrian president expressed sentiments of profound contentment and extreme satisfaction with the relations of friendship and cooperation existing between the two countries, which have become firmer in accordance with the bases the treaty of friendship and cooperation signed in 8 October 1980 drew up. He said that the past 4 years have proved that this treaty constitutes a firm basis for comprehensive cooperation between the two countries and that it is an important contribution to standing up to the imperialist and Zionist schemes which have the goal of subjecting our region to the dominance of America and Israel. He asserted that Syria was proceeding to stand up to these schemes with resolve, thereby confronting the constant strengthening of American-Israeli relations as embodied in the strategic cooperation agreement, the beginning of whose application has manifested itself in actual circumstances.

For its part, the Soviet leadership, in its cable to President al-Asad, described the treaty as an important contribution to the strengthening of strongpoints opposed to imperialism in the Arab world. It renewed its support for the just Arab struggle for peace, independence and national sovereignty and against Israeli aggression and American hegemony.

In the course of this, the statements which Faruq al-Shar', the minister of foreign affairs, gave described the most important and prominent aspects of the Syrian position vis-a-vis the issue of the Israeli withdrawal from

Lebanon and American mediation regarding that. Al-Shar''s statements, which he delivered while he was present in the United States, following his meeting with his American counterpart, George Schulz, reflected the Syrian views regarding the American position as a whole and activity underway regarding the withdrawal, on the one hand, and conditions in the Middle East in general. They lay within the general context of declared, well known and constant views, except for al-Shar''s observation following his meeting with Schulz that there were certain newly emergent positive points in the American position.

Following al-Shar''s return to Damascus, he met the new Soviet ambassador and received a copy of his letters of accreditation from him. He referred again to the constancy of the Syrian [sic] position supporting Syria and the Arab struggle and the absence of anything new and unexpected in this position, then the propaganda which the American and Zionist media had propagated during the meeting between Gromyko and President Reagan in Washington before his meeting with Yitzhaq Shamir in New York. Al-Shar's observations on the positive points regarding the American position on the Lebanese situation did not prevent him from holding Washington responsible for continued violence and tension in the Middle East through its unlimited support for Israel.

On the other hand, last week Damascus received the Yemeni president 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, who arrived there last Monday at the head of a large high-level delegation that accompanied him the following day, Tuesday, on his visit to the Soviet Union. The Yemeni president held conversations with President al-Asad which covered recent new developments on the Arab and Palestinian stages and ways of strengthening and developing Syrian-Yemeni relations.

In addition, President al-Asad received former Chancellor Bruno Kreisky twice in the course of his visit to Damascus, which took 3 days, in which Kreisky met with a number of leaders of Palestinian forces. The Syrian presidential palace's spokesman declared that the talks between President al-Asad and Chancellor Kreisky dealt with current conditions in the Middle East and their developments and the mutual effect between the Middle East crisis and the current state of international relations. Nothing was published about Kreisky's Palestinian talks except what Kreisky himself declared in the course of his press conference, when he referred to the importance of his talks, proceeding from the importance of the Syrian role, which he said was a very major one, stating that it would not be possible to bring about a comprehensive, solid peace without Syria's participation. Kreisky denied that he was an intermediary among the parties to the conflict in the region and said that he did not aspire to perform such mediation. He went on, "However, I have some ideas on the possibility of getting some things in motion, some of which have reached a dead end or bottleneck." Concerning his Palestinian talks, Kreisky said that he had heard the views and opinions of some Palestinian forces and affirmed the need for the resistance to resume talking in a single, clear voice. He pointed out that he had discussed, from humanitarian, not political, premises, the possibility of making an exchange of Israeli prisoners held by the Popular Front -- General Command.

AL-MUSTAQBAL has learned that the two meetings between President al-Asad and Kreisky, which took about 10 hours, constituted a broad excursion over the horizon of the situation in the Middle East and the world and the opportunities available to Chancellor Kreisky to continue his personal contributions, now that his contributions have lost their official character since he has left the position of chancellor. Although Chancellor Kreisky in his press conference did not want to reveal what discussions went on between him and President al-Asad, observers see, in accordance with the statements he made in his press conference, a number of points which merit attention. The first of these is his conviction in Syria's great influential, effective and noteworthy role, which has now been acknowledged even by the United States, since all parties concerned now have to admit that there will be no solution without Syria and no peace that ignores it. The second of these points is that a settlement cannot take pace through American mediation or role, and that there must be a role for the United Nations in any real permanent comprehensive resolution. Moreover, the Liberation Organization now occupies an extremely bad position and it has seriously to seek a way out which will enable it to talk with the world in a single voice.

Observers paused at length before Kreisky's open criticism of Peres' new cabinet in Israel and the Labor Party's acceptance of the Likud's conditions, taking into consideration Kreisky's status as a leader of international socialism and one of the most senior founders of this movement. Therefore, observers have linked Kreisky's visit to Damascus and his two lengthy sessions with President al-Asad to the scheduled upcoming visit by the Socialist president Francois Mitterrand to Damascus, because the blocking of an American settlement is empowering the role of international socialism to make progress, since it is an indication of effective movement toward a coming settlement, through a multi-party dialogue on the basis of which international socialism will hope to block the Soviets from benefiting totally from the overall errors American policy has committed through its unlimited support of irresponsible Israeli practices and policy. It is worth referring here also to the visit which Shimon Peres is to make next month to Paris in response to President Mitterrand's invitation.

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CSO: 4404/86

IMPACT OF PENINSULA SHIELD MANEUVERS

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 82, 3-9 Nov 84 pp 21-23

[Article: The Soviets Approach Step-by-Step, and The Winds of Polarization Are Repelled by the Peninsula Shield]

[Text] The end of the Peninsula Shield-2 maneuvers coincided with political developments which occurred in the area. Husayn Karim has followed these developments from London while Salih Zaytun has observed from al-Duha and Samir al-Shibani has observed from Riyadh the results and the impact of the military maneuvers which took place in "Hafar al-Batin" in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The military experts who followed from close range the maneuvers of the Peninsula Shield-2 belonging to the countries of the Cooperation Council have not concealed their surprise concerning the level of expertise attained in the military coordination among the six states on the council. The maneuvers were completed in the Hafar al-Batin area of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the 23rd of last month.

Other Western sources observed the distinct signs produced by these maneuvers clearly indicating that the countries of the Gulf have proven practically that they have replaced words with action in their on-going assertion that the protection of the region is the responsibility of its inhabitants. More than 13,000 troops representing divisions from the armies of the Cooperation Council countries created a true surprise which startled the observers because of the high efficiency with which they carried out the duties entrusted to them and because of their distinctive performance which is comparable to the most sophisticated armies. The first part of this maneuver started on 22 September and lasted an entire month. The conclusion of the final stage was honored by the attendance of the secretary general of the Cooperation Council, 'Abd Allah Ya'qub Bishara and by the presence of Prince 'Abd al-Rahman Bin 'Abd al-Aziz, Saudi Deputy Minister of Defense, and the chiefs of staff in the armies of the council's countries. The maneuvers were carried out with live ammunition, F-25 and F-15's, and 4,000 vehicles, rockets and helicopters and other types of anti-tank weaponry.

Military sources of the Gulf informed AL-TADAMUN that the Peninsula Shield-2 maneuvers differed from those that preceded them in the Emirates last year on the eve of the al-Duha conference. This difference is clear because of the size of the joint units and the participation of new personnel. This is a matter which brought about new studies in the areas of usage of personnel, weaponry, vehicles and air defense personnel whether on the ground or in the air, used for the first time in the Hafar al-Batin maneuvers. Staff Colonel Mubarak Bin 'Abd-al-Rahman Al Thani, chief of the Qatari general staff says that the maneuvers proved the capability of the Cooperative Council states to protect themselves, their security, their independence, and their territory. It verifies that the Gulf states have the capability and the efficiency to oppose any aggression and to defend the region.

The Qatari Chief of Staff indicated that these maneuvers would be repeated, and that they are only a part of the military training plan in the framework of military Gulf strategy.

He clarified that the Kuwait Summit conference will study this strategy which was decided upon by the Gulf ministers of defense on behalf of the chiefs of staff so that military cooperation is carried out among these countries in accordance with the strategy decided upon by the leadership of the Gulf.

Concerning the difference between the Peninsula Shield-1 maneuvers and the Peninsula Shield-2 maneuvers, 'Abd-Allah Bishara, the Secretary-General of the Cooperative Council, who attended the closing ceremony of the maneuvers, said that the maneuvers which took place in the Emirates last year were surely the beginning of the establishment of a collective basis so that they acquire the characteristic of defense exercises, however they represent a translation of a principle described by the leadership of the Gulf which is self-reliance. However the second maneuvers which took place in Hafar al-Batin were more distinctive which indicates that any future maneuvers will be more advanced and will witness more mobility.

Concerning the principle of the Gulf defense, Bishara said that the Gulf states should not be dependent upon the belief that volunteers will come to the defense of the region, this confirms the necessity of self-reliance no matter what the sacrifices and no matter what the cost.

He clarified that the rapid intervention forces belonging to the armies of the cooperative council are not a strike force, rather they are limited and do not represent an army capable of averting any enemy targeting a Gulf state; that is they cannot fulfill an effective role as a deterrent force. However its importance is that it represents the insistence of region's residents to shoulder the responsibility of its defense.

Bishara added that the Gulf Intervention Force is like an ambulance moving in concealed directions and to dangerous locations quickly in an organized fashion to face danger.

General 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Alkami, commander of the maneuvers, explained that the military exercises had gone beyond their military aspect to laying the foundation for the spirit of brotherhood in the Gulf. This indicated that there is general understanding among the leaders, because the goals of the maneuvers were to train the officers and staff in procedures to realize coordination for the different military operations and to train the joint units in applying battle tactics during a defensive operation in accordance with special operations as well as providing the joint forces with the opportunity to get to know Saudi military methods.

During the closing ceremony of the maneuvers, attended by Prince 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin 'Abd-al-Aziz, Saudi Deputy Minister of Defense and the Saudi Air Force, contained an abbreviated display of maneuvers beginning with the movement and mobilization of forces and concluding with a counter-attack operation.

The Saudi and Kuwaiti air forces participated by providing airlifts in cooperation with air defense forces utilizing air-ground weapons. The planes also carried out imaginary raids and dropped parachutists to occupy actual targets in hostile territory, and helicopters landed a unit of commandoes to destroy a unit of the enemy's army.

The importance of the Peninsula Shield-2 maneuvers, the results accomplished, and the lessons learned, appear in the light of political changes to which the area is exposed and with which appears from time to time, the gusty winds of polarization which seek to draw the Gulf under the wing of the East or under the wing of the West. In this respect Western circles regarded the results of the Peninsula Shield-2 maneuvers with great concern last week to be able to relate them to observation of another type concerning the future of Soviet-Gulf relations as follows:

1. Approach of the Soviets toward the region step by step. The agreement between Sanaa and Moscow is an important marker in this matter.
2. Increased talk of a high level visit to the Soviet Union by a Saudi official.

From this point, Western circles have posed the following question: Is the Afghanistan crisis the mine which still blocks the possible extension of relations between the Soviet Union and the Gulf? An informed source in the Gulf responded that this question has not been dealt with definitively as it was a few years back, or more exactly at the beginning of the Iraq-Iran War.

The Gulf states viewed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan from a point of view of rejection and did not support seeing a Mouslim people caught under the mandate of a heretical state. The principle was dependent upon ideology not upon political inclination characterized by goals and

concerns. Therefore the temper in the Gulf rose and fell in relation to the Soviet pressure on the Afghan resistance. Today a source in the Gulf said to AL-TADAMUN that the Gulf states have the same position in regards to the Afghan situation, however the political and strategic complications which have arisen from the Iran-Iraq War required that the Gulf states look to the Soviet Union in a manner different from the reality mirrored by the negative results no matter what the disregard for its role in the most dangerous crisis faced by the region.

In this framework there are news reports about the probable visit to a Saudi official to Moscow. Perhaps within this same framework it is possible to view the recent visit to Gromyko and the surprising rapprochement between the Soviet Union and Kuwait even though there is a probability that a Saudi official may visit Moscow, as parts of a series of signs beginning to appear from the Soviet leadership towards the policy of Arab modernization of which Saudi Arabia is one of the strongest proponents.

Thus Western observers have begun to calculate the results of such a visit, especially in light of the non-repudiation issued by the Deputy Chief of the International Relations Department in the CPSU central committee, Karen Brutents, and his praise of the Saudi role in the area. In response to this point at an exposition, he said that it is likely that an important Saudi official would visit the Soviet capital. He also indicated that Saudi Arabia had been among the first, rather the first Arab state to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

This allusion by a Soviet official in Saudi Arabia referred to the visit of the Saudi Foreign Minister, Sa'ud al-Faysal in an Arab delegation which visited the Soviet capital at the expense of the Fes Summit to explain the peace plan resolved upon at the summit.

Attracting attention at the time was the fact that official Soviet concern was principally directed towards Sa'ud al-Faysal to open the channels of communication between Riyadh and Moscow to a significant extent and also to extract an image of a supporting position taken by the Soviet leadership with regard to the attack on the holy shrine in the Ka'aba, in the minds of the Saudi leadership.

Western political circles believe that the Soviets have taken refuge since that time in a dependence upon an open policy with the Gulf states in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

A surprising change occurred represented by the Soviet Union's failure to reject King Fahd's peace plan in the Middle East, and the Soviets countered that with a big show of initiatives for rapprochement with Saudi Arabia which it did not want to ignore especially at a time when it was becoming more pessimistic over Reagan's diplomacy.

During the last few years Saudi Arabia has issued on different occasions indications that increasing understanding exists concerning the role of the Soviet Union in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and this understanding has arrived at a new high in the wake of developments in the Iraq-Iran War. This does not mean however, according to the beliefs of an informed source in the Gulf, that the way is prepared for opening diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union. Despite numerous Soviet efforts to entice the Saudis to renew the broken diplomatic relations, there does not appear on the horizon any probability that the two countries will renew diplomatic relations soon.

Even the casual observer has noticed that the Soviets have scored an important point in the rapprochement with the countries of the region when it achieved the cooperation and friendship agreement signed last 19 October between Sanaa & Moscow during the visit of President 'Abdallah Salah to the Soviet Union. It is seen as not in keeping with affairs of the region that this agreement allows the Soviets to observe the Gulf in general from Sanaa which has significant relations with the states of the Cooperation Council. In accordance with the explanations concerning this agreement it is certain that new adjustments will be examined on the scene in the Gulf which must be reflected in one way or another in the total Soviet consideration of the area. When that happens questions concerning who will make use of relationships resulting from the end of the Iraq-Iran War will not be comprehensible because the Gulf states will have benefitted to one degree or another from the international political contradictions involved in establishing balanced relations with the two super powers raising the sword of polarization over the region in the foreseeable future.

Therefore the "heating" up of the security situation embodied by the Peninsula Shield-2 Maneuvers came in the midst of a previous and subsequent period of much political action which renewed political maneuvering on the Arab scene as well as the subsequent occurrence of developments which forced states in region to coordinate and cooperate to a greater degree among themselves.

12390

CSO: 4404/66

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

SYRIAN SQUABBLE WITH JORDAN--Observers have noted with astonishment that the campaign the Syrian media launched against King Husayn, following his declaration of the resumption of diplomatic relations with Egypt, came a week after the signing of a trade agreement between the two countries, in which Syria undertook to train Jordanian technicians in the agricultural field and to sell Jordan 110,000 tons of potatoes and Aleppo pistachios. [Text] [London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic No 343, 8 Oct 84 p 5] 11887

CSO: 4404/86

GOVERNMENT PURCHASE OF LOCAL GOODS URGED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 24 Oct 84 p 10

[Editorial by Muhsin Muhammad in the column "From the Heart"]

[Text] An American state issued orders requiring all government agencies and organizations to buy the instruments, goods and materials that they need from the same state's production.

The order said that these agencies and organizations are obligated to buy locally-produced goods even if these goods are higher in cost and lower in quality.

Other states protested against this order, claiming that it isolates the states and establishes barriers, restrictions and obstacles between the states, but the state stuck by the order and said that the goal is to encourage local agricultural and industrial production by any means.

In face of this perseverance, other states decided to apply the same rule.

Here in Egypt, we have raised the slogan "Made in Egypt" for more than a year and we have asked people to buy Egyptian products and give them priority over others. Right away everyone started talking about this slogan on radio and television programs and newspapers wrote about Egyptian agricultural and industrial production and how abundant and advanced it is. But the campaign stopped there without taking numerous implemental measures that would be required for application.

On the other side, many companies in the public and private sectors called for the imposition of customs protection and a ban on importing articles that are produced domestically. But the outcry died down in accordance with the eternal principle that we are in a country in which everything is forgotten after a while.

The time has come for a new start analogous to what was done by one of the 50 states in America, i.e., requiring government ministries, agencies and organizations to buy domestic products. If it happens that these products are not available, then the agency must obtain an order from the appropriate minister if it wants to buy imported articles justifiably or for any reason.

That will definitely lead to a concern with domestic production and how to increase it and fill any shortages in it as well as an attempt to raise its level as long as demand for it is assured and continuous.

In this case, it would be possible to instruct government banks to give loans to companies that need an increase in capital if this is requested by the appropriate ministries. Priority for loans in this case would be for those banks.

Perhaps it would be better in this case if the government gave priority in purchasing its supplies to the public sector over the private sector and if the public sector were given priority in carrying out necessary projects, as long as this is accomplished without resorting to contractors who secretly buy from the private sector or who buy imported goods under some false or convincing pretext.

It is not the intent of all this to impose new bureaucratic complications on the government machinery. The goal is to renew our national campaigns that aim to support national production and to correct its course by trial and error.

12727
CSO: 4504/87

AL-JIHAD TRIAL JUDGE DISCUSSES CASE

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic No 3131, 12 Oct 84 pp 18-19

[Interview with Justice 'Abd-al-Ghaffar Muhammad by Raja' 'Abdallah: "Al-Jihad Court Judge in His First Interview. I Have Fulfilled My Mission Within The Confines of The Law Without Intervention by Any Political Power"; date and place not specified]

[Text] The al-Jihad case is not yet closed. Although the sentences were handed down on 30 September, the al-Jihad court chief magistrate, Justice 'Abd-al-Ghaffar Muhammad, is still editing and reviewing the opinions daily so as to sign it and send it before the end of October to the Supreme State Security Prosecution to be at the disposal of the chief of state who has the authority to approve, amend or annul it. The al-Jihad chief magistrate is still working every day on the case that has lasted two full years, during which he handed down sentences that were awaited by 300 young defendants, their families and the public at large behind them.

His sentences were gratifying. Even those sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor wept with joy.

AL-MUSAWWAR went to the judge to get close to him. He could not talk while the [court] opinion was still under preparation. Nonetheless, it was an endeavor that allowed us to get acquainted with some of his ideas and much of his history.

Justice 'Abd-al-Ghaffar Muhammad was born in Cairo, 13 January 1929. In compliance with his father's wishes, he went to the Cairo University Law School and was graduated from there in 1948 with a very good grade. That same year, he was assigned to the general prosecutor's office where he remained until 1954, shuttling between Cairo and the Upper Egypt governorates. He returned as the prosecuting attorney for North Cairo where he remained until 1960. During this time, he investigated the most important criminal incidents in the capital.

He then moved to the Supreme State Security Prosecution until 1963, investigating the most important political incidents of that period, represented in attempted coups and espionage cases. From there he

went to the judiciary where he filled the position of chief of the court of Asyut in al-Zaqaziq until his return as chief of prosecution in 1967. He was a member of the examination and claim office established right after the [1967] setback.

He also investigated the conspiracy case of [former] minister of defense Shams Badran against President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, the case of the intelligence agency's digressions under Salah Nasr and the Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Shirqawi torture case. He took charge of the prosecution in these cases in a special court headed by Husayn al-Shafi'i.

In July 1968, after the court closed, he was asked to organize the general prosecutor's technical office. From chief of the technical office, he was promoted to justice in September 1971, then to chief of the appellate court in June 1980.

Justice 'Abd-al-Ghaffar Muhammad is married and has only one son, who was not inclined toward law, so he studied engineering. Hence, the father's hopes went toward his eldest daughter who gave in to his wishes and went to law school. Muna was graduated as lawyer of government cases and was the only one in the legal profession. The second oldest daughter, Mirvet, preferred to be a pharmacist, while Maha worked as an advisor in the ministry of justice and the youngest one, Fayiqah, became a doctor.

Justice 'Abd-al-Ghaffar Muhammad, chief of the al-Jihad court, is bent on not discussing the al-Jihad case. Even the interview was in a room that did not have one single paper related to the case.

We asked him how much effort was expended in the case. He said: "The case took 2 years. The first session started 5 January 1982 and ended 30 September 1984. It took 30,000 pages, not counting what was presented during the trial, and 186 sessions, some held in the morning and some in the evening. The prosecution pleaded in 9 sessions and the defense took 96 sessions, with the balance devoted to testimony by the defendants, the prosecution witnesses and the defense witnesses.

[Question] Is it considered a long time for such a case, or is it an adequate time?

[Answer] We doubled our efforts; it could have gone longer than that had we, for instance, worked 6 hours and not 12 hours. It received its full due.

[Question] How did this great effort affect you family-wise and health-wise?

[Answer] With regard to the family, I hardly saw them, but they appreciated the mission I had to fulfill. As for my health, it suffered much. My blood sugar level went up to 400 last January and I had a hemorrhage in my left eye and a detached retina which required treatment abroad where I underwent a very delicate operation. My youngest daughter, Fayiqah, who is a doctor, went with me. Despite the successful, thank God, surgery, I had a cataract and I am waiting for another operation any time now.

It was a mission I had to fulfill. I did not get any real vacation all that time. I was preoccupied with the case, even during my ailment abroad.

[Question] The number of defendants in the case reached 300, a number sure to cause chaos in the court. But the sessions were calm and orderly. How did you manage that?

[Answer] It was not difficult. I was able to control the defendants from the first session by applying the law to everyone without discrimination. I set the rules of equality within the confines of the law to run the sessions and we had no problems. The application of prescribed laws ensures that things go smoothly. Therefore, everyone obeyed the rules we set.

[Question] There were many rumors about the court during the trial, such as threats against you.

[Answer] Not true.

[Question] Differences among the court staff?

[Answer] Not at all.

[Question] Differences with the security agencies?

[Answer] Not at all. Never happened. Judges do not place themselves in a position of differing with any side.

[Question] Some expected the sentences to be more severe and it was said that this would please the political authorities.

[Answer] In September 1982, I was legally assigned to the case by the appellate court's general assembly. God helped me bring out the truth in this case. I would like to emphasize, in order to give everyone his due, that the political authorities did not interfere with the judiciary. All throughout my 36-year career, I have not sensed any interference with the judiciary.

[Question] Why did the defendants expect harsher sentences?

[Answer] That is their prerogative.

[Question] When will the opinion be known?

[Answer] The opinion so far has filled 1,000 [pages] which I review every day in preparation for the court's signature so that it can be sent to the Supreme State Security Prosecution for approval by the chief of state. We must deliver the opinion before the end of October, after which we will be able to talk about it.

[Question] About the difficulties experienced by judges in their judicial life, be they material or overwork, how can we make life easier for them?

[Answer] The judiciary performs a noble mission that cannot be evaluated in terms of money. Its recompense is with God. The judge does not ask, but the government must provide for his needs without asking so that he may fulfill his sacred mission. The work of the judge is a relationship between man and his God.

As for improving the situation with regard to overwork and other things, it begins with selecting elements with leadership qualities in the legal profession, then amending the laws that impede procedures and, finally, undertaking a radical modification of the court assistants system.

[Question] During your handling of the case, did you come across human incidents that touched you?

[Answer] The judge does not get emotionally involved.

(The al-Jihad court fidgets. He was preoccupied with reviewing the opinion. He was called every now and then, "but I asked him one final question: "Have you passed a death sentence in any case you have handled in your career as a judge?"")

[Answer] No, I have not.

I felt that he explained much by this reply. Despite his terse and decisive manner, his humanness was made clear through the look in his eyes, made weary by the difficult search for justice, and a merciful justice it was.

12502

CSO: 4504/74

CHANGES MADE BY MUBARAK PRESIDENCY EVALUATED

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic No 3131, 12 Oct 84 p 16

[Article by Dr Yahya al-Jamal: "For the Sake of God, Has There Been Change?"]

[Text] More than one Arab journalist last week asked me: "Has there been a change in Egypt during the past 3 years, since Husni Mubarak took over as president of the republic of Egypt?"

My unwavering answer was: "Yes, there has been a great change in all fields and without hubbub or pretense."

Suffice it to compare what was 3 years ago and what is today. Take the matter of democratic practice.

When Husni Mubarak took over the presidency, political life was governed by severe tension and wariness on all fronts. Political parties were totally or almost paralyzed, with their leaders, as well as the great majority of the political non-partisan leaders, behind bars. "All" of the opposition party press was totally banned. Political life in Egypt was surrounded with dejection, regardless of who was responsible for it.

Three years later, one can see a picture that is totally different. Not one politician is behind bars.

Egypt today has five opposition parties pursuing their activities at will and loudly voicing their opinions within and outside the country.

On just about every day of the week, one opposition newspaper publishes whatever it wishes, writes whatever it wants and criticizes as much as it pleases, without being banned or stopped by any human being.

Very briefly, as I said to a Kuwaiti newspaper which was quoted by the Egyptian press, Husni Mubarak in the last 3 years has been able to ease the existing tension and replace it with an atmosphere of trust and communication that prevails among the civilized, even when they disagree.

Besides that, besides the issue of democracy in our domestic life, I do not think anyone disagrees over the fact that we take our affairs seriously, that we are attempting to tackle the problems head-on and that we are not trying to hide their gravity or to deceive and mislead the people. Likewise, the clear partiality toward the broad masses and the sincere wish to alleviate their suffering--while being aware of the gravity of such suffering--almost constitutes the core of all policies in recent times.

If we leave the domestic scene and go onto the Arab sphere, changes that have taken place in these last 3 years are too clear to require an explanation. As I said to one of those journalists, take the Arab press headlines and the Egyptian press headlines 3 years ago and today, and examine the Arab radio broadcasts then and now, and you will find that what has taken place is enormous, enormous in its scope and enormous in its value and significance.

The Arab press had only one concern, to mete out charges against Egypt and everyone in it. The Egyptian press, or part of it at least, did not hesitate to pay it back twofold or even to take the initiative from time to time. The radio stations followed suit.

Look at the practice now. It is totally different save for one or two countries. On the specific occasion of the restoration of diplomatic ties with Jordan, not one Arab newspaper contained any of the prattle of yesterday and not one Egyptian newspaper had any of the foolishness aimed at portraying the Egyptians as pharaohs and the Arabs as a backward bunch. This is all over, or most of it. The Egyptian press and broadcasting service have started a new, serious, objective and honest beginning that has compelled everyone to give up the language of revilement.

If we move from form to substance, we find that the channels of communications between Egypt and the rest of its Arab nation are still open and that all have realized now that Egypt's absence is a loss to everyone, including Egypt itself.

Whereas full diplomatic relations with Jordan have been restored and whereas Egyptian-Iraqi relations are considered an advanced example of civilized relations between brothers who belong to one nation, Egypt's relations with the rest of the Arab homeland are governed, on Egypt's part at least, by the notion that they are a relationship of destiny untouched by events, any events in the course of history. I have no doubt that this is the feeling of the great majority of the Arab regions towards the big region, their Egypt. Egypt is not just for itself, but for all the Arabs and by all the Arabs as well.

In these last 3 years, Egypt has regained its full membership in the Islamic Conference. Ahmed Sekou Toure, God rest his soul, came to invite it to occupy the vacant seat among the Islamic countries. Thus, the country of al-Azhar [University] returned to its rightful place,

at the head of its Islamic world. I do not think this would have been possible had not Husni Mubarak followed a calm, unemotional policy toward the Arab nation and the Islamic world alike.

In our international relations, we went through a time when we forgot something called non-alignment. A set "portion" of our press was devoted to the "villification" of the Soviet Union, once in the morning, once in the evening and once in between.

The situation changed and we returned to the non-aligned movement to fill our position, one of the three founders of this movement responsible for pushing it forward to be a factor of balance in international politics between the two wrestling giants.

We realized that we cannot keep up a permanent boycott of one of the two great powers of modern times, so we restored our natural relations with the Soviet Union and sent to it one of the brightest and most brilliant Egyptian diplomats.

Then we weigh the whole thing with this country or that in light of our national interests, which are the gauge for our getting close to this country or our moving away from that country.

After all of this, we ask if there has been a change?

Yes, we want more change for the better. Yes, we want more because we realize that life without hope is a bitter life and that Egypt deserves much and expects much and we all owe it much.

Yes, there has been a big change in Egypt. And yes, we expect much from change.

I think this is a word of truth for the sake of God.

12502

CSO: 4504/72

LACK OF FREEDOM OF PRESS DENIED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 18 Oct 84 p 5

[Editorial by Muhammad al-Hayawan in the column "A Word of Love"] -

[Text] Some people do not believe that the press in Egypt is free and that the newspapers write what they like and that the readers' letters find their place in the newspapers even if they include what Malik said about wine [i.e. inappropriate remarks] and that the party newspapers say what they wish even if sometimes they are afflicted with a kind of excessiveness. Even so, no one makes any accusation against them--the matter is left to the reader. You judge the newspapers on the basis of the truth or falsity that you perceive. You like whichever reliable people you choose and you eliminate from consideration whichever dissemblers you choose.

But freedom of the press in Egypt cannot possibly permit that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan be defended or that these terrible slaughters that the Communists commit in Afghanistan be justified simply by Moscow's sending an appeal to a writer, or simply because a writer has committed himself to the same direction as Moscow, a direction that God and his Prophet reject.

You can be civil, and we are a civil people. A writer might go to a communist country and then return to write, "Look at what Socialism is doing." But civility cannot be at the expense of Islam, because then it goes beyond civility to something else that I don't think anyone would want to fall into.

Some countries do not believe that the press in Egypt is free. If we said that Germans are fleeing the hunger of Communist Germany for the luxury of West Germany, Berlin would protest. And if we said that the Jews in New York are the worst thing about it, then Israel would protest and accuse whoever says that of being an anti-semite, even though Arabs are semites.

So the general rule is that the countries that have freedom of the press do not protest about freedom of press in Egypt, whereas those who present one protest after the other are the ones who wish Egypt no good because freedom is good and terrorism is evil and there is no middle ground between them.

12727

CSO: 4504/89

APPLICATION OF ISLAMIC LAW ENCOURAGED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 21 Oct 84 p 5

[Editorial by Muhammad al-Hayawan in the column "A Word of Love"]

[Text] Islam is both a religion and a state, and this is an issue that has been resolved. The Islamic Shari'ah is the principal source for laws, and this is an issue that has been established and incorporated into the constitution. Egypt is a country whose official religion is Islam--another issue not open to discussion. All the parties demand the application of the Islamic Shari'ah, so there is consensus on that. The problem is how we begin.

Islam has more enemies than the heart has worries. They all hunt for anything against Islam and then they spread it. They use all the pressure and influence they have to prevent the application of Islam.

But there is an idea that we start quietly, counting and studying our steps, so that at the end we arrive at the application of the Islamic Shari'ah.

What if we slowly issued one resolution after the other until we reached the goal and result that we want?

Let us start with what is simplest. What if the government issued a resolution forbidding the serving of liquor at government functions and in Egyptian embassies abroad? Think of it as a kind of budgetary measure. Especially now that we have abolished the serving of liquor on Egyptian airplanes by judicial decision. We can start with what is simplest, making the outward appearance of the capital Islamic, but leaving the inner part to God. It is not acceptable that the restaurants of the capital of an Islamic country should be open at midday during Ramadan.

Let us start with the new generation, the future of this nation. Let us start by making religion a basic subject in education, by having more classes for it, by expanding instruction in Islamic history, the history of heroism and sacrifice. Let us start with what is simplest in the radio and television programs, in the movies, in the theater. It is not necessary for all the actresses to take off their clothes in order to ensure an audience nor is it important to use shameful language in order to make people laugh.

Sometimes the government carries out what is demanded but only after a while. It had been demanded of radio and television that they diversify their programs, but the government paid no attention. But after it started to pay attention, radio and television succeeded in spreading religious consciousness and religious culture to the people's satisfaction.

Somr Arab countries have bought segments of the series "Nadwat al-Ra'y" ["opinion circle"] and started to show them and I have read some of the best parts of them in the newspapers.

It remains to be said that the application of the Shari'ah does not mean a religious government. It means rather a Muslim government that applies the Shari'ah and respects the limits set by God and adheres to Islam in letter and spirit.

12727

CSO: 4504/87

REORGANIZATION IN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 26 Oct 84 p 6

[Editorial: "Reorganization of the Party and the New Phase of the National Effort"]

[Text] The decision was announced yesterday to form a 13-member political bureau for the National Democratic Party, with President Husni Mubarak presiding.

~~This decision marks the beginning of a more comprehensive process of reorganizing the party at all levels in accordance with the promises and appeals made by the president after the party won a majority in the elections of last May.~~

The reorganization of the party at all levels, which began with the decision to form the political bureau yesterday, is not just for the sake of change. Its basic and only goal is to bring the new organization into harmony with the exigencies of the national effort in its new phase, a phase that requires that every effort be made, that all energy be gathered and that an ideal model be presented. These are matters that are attainable only with a capable political organization that can feel the pulse of the people, adopt its ambitions and fuse together with them in a tireless and creative effort for the good of all Egyptians.

President Mubarak's call has always been for officials to go down to the workplace and for the political leaders to present a good example to the citizens. His call has also always been for self-denial, standing shoulder to shoulder and an earnest effort to solve the problems that we face in alleviating the burden of the toiling masses.

The different segments of the Egyptian people have welcomed this appeal in view of the fact that a commitment to it will assure that the people attain the benefit for themselves and for Egypt for which they are striving.

For this reason, the people look at the decision to form a political bureau for the National Democratic Party as an important step toward a complete reorganization of the party, since this would simultaneously represent a healthy and necessary beginning toward launching the national effort within the proper framework and on the proper path, in which the desires of all Egyptians would be united, within and without the party, with restoration and reconstruction as the goal.

WAR PRODUCTION MINISTER INTERVIEWED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 27 Oct 84 p 6

[Interview with Dr Jamal al-Sayyid Ibrahim, minister of state for war production, by Jamal Kamal, military editor of AL-JUMHURIYAH; date and place not specified]

[Text] More than one Egyptian military surprise will be shown in the Egyptian wing that is being set up in al-Mazah on the 10th of next November. Modifications made by Egyptian experts in the military factories on Soviet, American and Chinese weapons will be shown. The exhibition will also include the first Egyptian-made air defense system.

Preliminary studies have been concluded for the production of the first Egyptian tank, which will be completed within 3 years.

Minister of State for War Production Dr Jamal al-Sayyid Ibrahim, in an important discussion with AL-JUMHURIYAH, announced new kinds of weapons and the efforts being made by Egyptian experts in the area of military manufacturing in the production of new weapons. The text of the discussion follows.

[Question] It has been frequently mentioned recently that Egypt has signed an agreement with some French firms to produce the first Egyptian air defense system. What are the details of the project?

[Answer] After the start of serial production for the 23 mm antiaircraft guns and the beginning of serial production for the Hawkeye missiles, the armed forces requested of the Ministry of War Production the manufacture of the first complete air defense system, and in fact, an agreement was signed with the two companies Thompson and Dassault and the tests were successful.

The new system, which will be exhibited in the wing of the Abu Za'bal Engineering Industries Company, is composed of three units mounted on three American M-113 armored carriers. It consists of a radar unit to spot aircraft, a target-tracking unit and a firing unit consisting of a 23 mm gun with a range of 2,500 meters and a firing rate of up to 1,000 rounds per minute and four infrared Hawkeye missiles with an effective range from 50 to 4,400 meters. Serial production of this system will begin in 1985 or 1986.

The state minister of war production added that the defense equipment exhibition will include many accomplishments of Egyptian war production. They are:

--The Chinese modification of the long-range Soviet 130 mm gun after reducing its weight. It has been completely assembled in military factories in preparation for production.

--Mounting the D-30 gun on two armored carriers, one an American M-109 and the other a British ATB to produce the first Egyptian-made self-propelled artillery unit.

--Replacing the guns of Soviet T-55 tanks with a long-range 105 mm gun.

[Question] After producing artillery and missiles in Egypt, what steps have been taken to manufacture tanks and what are the details of the 200 project?

[Answer] In fact, several months ago, the company responsible for manufacture was set up and its budget was appropriated and this occurred within 2 years of the completion of studies relating to the production of Egyptian tanks. Specifications were set down and agreements were obtained from some advanced countries. A production agreement was made between the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of War Production at the same time. Indeed production was completed of some tank cannon barrels and spare parts for them as well as communications and electronic equipment and target facilities.

In connection with communications equipment, production of the first domestic radar will be completed at the beginning of next year now that the factory has been completely set up and the equipment has been imported.

[Question] Has Egyptian war production reached the point where it can satisfy the weapons needs of the Arab countries--and is there a demand for Egyptian arms?

[Answer] The Ministry of War Production has prepared a production plan providing for supplying the armed forces with the equipment used most, i.e. ammunition and indeed 95 percent of the ammunition needs have been met. We now have a surplus that is enough for the needs of most of the Arab countries as well as antiaircraft guns, field guns and missiles. We now have a depth in manufacturing that would allow us to fill orders from any Arab country.

We will not identify these countries, whether Arab or African, out of respect for their wishes, but it is sufficient to know that many countries have placed orders and hope to obtain the D-30 and 23 mm cannons, Hawkeye missiles and the Swingfire, all sold in Egypt.

[Question] It has been published that arms sales in Egypt in the past 2 years have reached a billion dollars and that Egypt exports arms to Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Gabon, Senegal, Nigeria, Zambia and finally Iraq and some of the Gulf states. When will Egypt become a first-rank arms exporting country to the point that it is one of the primary sources of revenue?

[Answer] Arms are considered among the most strategic commodities, falling under the supervision and control of the state and the countries that import them, and the same is true of information, technology and studies pertaining to them. For this reason, we will not give notice of any deals involving Egyptian arms unless the importing countries themselves announce them.

[Question] With respect to the Arab countries, what are the Arab countries that will be participating in the arms exhibition and what is the latest news on the Brazilian training aircraft that was going to be manufactured in Egypt?

[Answer] Iraq is the only Arab country that will participate, with 17 companies involved in the production of ammunition and spare parts. With respect to the Brazilian training aircraft, Tucano, manufacture and assembly of the first aircraft at the Fadir factory of the Arab Organization for Manufacturing is 80 percent complete and it will be shown at the exhibition.

[Question] Why have positive steps not been taken toward manufacturing the first Egyptian fighter aircraft and why does Egypt not participate in international arms exhibitions?

[Answer] In order for us to start taking steps toward manufacturing an Egyptian fighter aircraft, we would have to study its economics in terms of present possibilities, financing and marketing. Egypt has a great deal of experience in the manufacture of aircraft, and setting up an aircraft factory would be a very simple matter, but there is the problem of financing and marketing.

As for participating in international arms exhibitions, after Egypt has reached a significant stage in military production, it will participate in the next international arms exhibition. It was going to participate in the coming months in exhibitions in France, England and Greece, but it decided rather to concentrate on the exhibition that is being held in Egypt.

[Question] Finally, what are the steps to safeguard the Egyptian arms industries?

[Answer] There are many precautionary steps. We have good relations with all the countries that produce the raw materials used in the manufacture of arms and they are ready to supply us in any quantity. Nevertheless, the Hulwan Smelting Company is now conducting final tests in the production of the steel used in heavy industries, artillery and armor plate.

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CSO: 4504/89

INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIAL SYSTEM DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 29 Oct 84 p 5

[Editorial by Muhammad al-Hayawan in the column "A Word of Love"]

[Text] The judiciary in Egypt is free, equitable and impartial. The law in Egypt is sovereign. These are declared principles that are reasserted every day by the political leadership and by the judiciary itself. These are also features of a free, stable and civilized society, even if some people do not like that because they have become accustomed to life without law. They take every opportunity to agitate against the judiciary under the slogan that the judiciary is the one that is ruling Egypt.

No one interferes with the judiciary in Egypt--this is also a declared principle. But some quarters try to raise doubt about it. They try to say that judicial judgments are sometimes issued with political rather than legal motivations. This is an outright lie and an attempt to raise doubt and uncertainty and to strike at legal stability.

Legal stability is a necessity. This means respecting the existent laws even if we do not agree with them. I do not claim to know what goes on inside the judiciary, but some people are certain that there are those who are trying to strike at legal stability in Egypt.

Some days ago the prosecution requested the release of the defendants in the case involving membership in the Jihad organization, and the court approved the decision and postponed the case indefinitely. Some people imagine that there were political motivations and leanings behind that. Those who say that do not know the law or its precedents.

Egyptian law does not punish membership in any organization unless there is a criminal conspiracy behind that and the preparatory steps have been verified. I do not believe that the prosecution had evidence of that.

Judicial precedents say that also. All of the defendants were freed in the case involving membership in the Repudiation and Renunciation organization, although the head of the organization was sentenced to death.

We are proud of the Egyptian judiciary because it is a backbone and a protection for us, because it is a refuge and defender for us. Because it is our sense of security and safety. Do not try to incite anyone against the judiciary or raise doubts about it.

YASIN SIRAJ-AL-DIN CASE DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 28 Oct 84 p 3

[Editorial by 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Sawi in the column "Drop of Dew"]

[Text] The matter of the deputy Yasin Siraj-al-Din has two sides. Some people consider the behavior of the New Wafd Party a clarification of the attitude of the deputy toward the party to which he belongs. Other people consider this behavior, like the behavior of an ancient Egyptian judge, a judgment of oppression on his people in order to make it known that he is just. His name was Khiti, and the case was a conflict between a group from his family and a group that he did not know. His people were in the right, and the people would say again and again that the judge's family was in the right, but a number of other people had their doubts, but nevertheless expected the judge to make a judgment in favor of his family.

The judge's decision came out against his family in favor of the others, the strangers. His family shouted in fury against him and made complaints against him, but he stuck by the verdict that he had issued so that he would not be accused of giving a judgment in favor of his family. When the judge Khiti died, his family reopened the litigation in defense of their solid and established right.

This time, the verdict was in their favor, and it became known of the judge Khiti that he gave judgment unjustly so that he might become known for being just. In the history of the minister Sa'd Zaghlul there is a precedent of another kind that was analyzed by our professor al-'Aqqad when he wrote about his personality. Fathi Zaghlul was one of the distinguished men nominated for the post of director of Dar al-'Ulum.

In 'Aqqad's analysis of the personality of Sa'd before he became a leader, he says that Sa'd felt that his conscience was above suspicion. He formed a committee of the leading educators to nominate for him the best of the competitors. They nominated Fathi Zaghlul for rational and objective reasons. So Minister Sa'd Zaghlul chose him as director of Dar al-'Ulum without hesitation, even though he was his brother.

On this basis, I ask Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din from the point of view of the party, but also from a liberal, intellectual point of view, "Does he want to commit injustice in order to become famous for justice like the judge Khiti? Or would

he prefer to be like Sa'd Zaghlul, having taken as a slogan for the Wafd newspaper a saying of Sa'd Zaghlul's that appears on the Wafd newspaper: 'Right above might and the nation above the government.'"

I sincerely hope that the principle receives wide discussion. The matter is not just the issue of Yasin Siraj-al-Din as much as it is the issue of Egyptian democratic application in the light of the elections by list.

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AGRICULTURE CALLED TOUGHEST DILEMMA FACING COUNTRY

Casablanca LAMALIF in French N° 159, Oct 84 pp 26-31

[Article by Zayka Daoud]

[Text] Is agriculture a political sector? A social sector? An economic sector? With 50 percent of government investment and 40 percent of the population involved in it, as well as 50 percent of all jobs, one hesitates to make any hard-and-fast judgment. Yet, when you assemble and look at the data -- 50 percent of our grain imported (as compared with 20 percent only a few years ago (1); an agricultural sector reporting a mounting deficit (1.26 million DH in 1980)(2); going hand in hand with increasing food dependency; imports already costing 1,534 million DH for wheat alone and consuming a total of 3,726 million DH (1983); yields that are declining at alarming rates, averaging no more than 6 quintals (qx) per hectare despite considerable progress with irrigation; when you focus, not so much on the depopulation of the rural countryside as on the stagnation of a rural world abandoned by its most energetic people, you can only conclude, on the face of the evidence, that this is not -- or rather is no longer -- a sector of the economy.

Whether you look at cereal grains, or livestock, or oils, Moroccan agriculture no longer feeds the cities, and even the farm-and-food sector, upon which the government has just decided to concentrate its efforts, must rely on imports for its supplies. Of course, there is the drought, particularly since 1980, and farmers are barely managing -- nobody really knows how well, because nobody knows how much of the food they grow farm families eat or feed to their livestock to stay alive. But how do they feed themselves? If we are to go by the single criterion available for purchases in the local markets, all the numbers are down and gifts, because Morocco lives increasingly on gifts of food, can offset this deficit only to a pitifully small extent (3), particularly where they are most needed. For a very long time the

nutritional and food situation has been a source of concern: two thirds of the population simply does not get enough calories, while the lucky third gets 130 percent more than it needs and 8 percent of the population eats twice the recommended amount.

Creeping Malnutrition

According to the experts, marginal malnutrition affects 30 to 40 percent of the city population and 30 to 60 percent of the rural population, and grave malnutrition affects 1 to 3 percent of city-dwellers and 3 to 13 percent of country people. Children (at least 41.5 percent) are particularly affected by the phenomena attendant upon borderline and severe malnutrition (4.7 percent) as a result both of undernourishment and dietary imbalance. In addition, this can be seen in the excess consumption of cereals, of which the average requirements are reckoned at about 260 kilograms per capita each year, 160 kilograms in urban areas and 250 kilos per capita each year in the country (4), whereas not nearly enough meat goes into the diet, and fresh fruits and vegetables are sorely lacking, since the only substitute for cereal grains is legumes. True, these data tend to balance one another out, and the increase in current demand, based primarily on demographic statistics, is calculated in government estimates as an increase of 2.8 percent per year for cereals, 10 percent for vegetable oils, 3.4 percent for sugar, 6 percent for milk, and 4 percent for meat. If the figures are reliable, we are witnessing a slow downward adjustment, since in 1971, while household budgets in general set aside 50 percent for food, cereal grains accounted for 25 percent of that total, and sugar claimed 12 percent. In any case, the demand for cereal grains is still calculated by the experts, including those of the FAO, at 60 million quintals per year, which the country will absolutely never produce again. In 1978/79 production was posted at 39 million quintals (9.4 qx per hectare); in 1979/80 it was 43 million qx (10.2 hectare), in 1980/81 it was 20 million qx (4.8 hectare), a harvest that was by all odds the most catastrophic, and in the course of which Morocco had to buy 2,044 million DH worth of wheat alone from abroad, as compared with purchases worth 856 million DH in 1970. In 1981/82, abundant rainfall boosted the harvest by 19 percent, with yields of 49 million qx (12.40 quintals per hectare). The downward trend resurfaced again in 1982/83, however, with a harvest of 34 million qx (7.6 qx per hectare), and, most noteworthy, this year, in 1983/84 with production estimated at 31.5 million qx (6 qx per hectare), despite collective cultivation (after the Touzia model), spreading of 769,000 qx of fertilizers and planting of 559,000 qx of selected seed.

This means that we are not merely lagging 18 percent behind the yearly average for the sixties, when Morocco was still self-sufficient: we are meeting only half of our food requirements. Of course, peas and beans and lentils, of which there was greater production (5), helped cushion the worst of the catastrophe, but the other grains did not yield the best possible results: 50 percent of the maize crop was lost that summer following the rains

and the heat wave, and last summer we were forced to increase our corn purchases abroad by 43.9 percent and our barley purchases by 20 percent (6); rice was not the only food we had to buy abroad (310,000 qx of it), since the harvest amounted to only 92,364 qx.

The conundrum is that the faster the population grows, the faster production declines: in 1976 the population was reckoned at some 16 million persons, and we produced 55 million qx. Today the population surpasses 24/25 million and we produced 31.5 million qx. The decline, according to these indices, amounts to half.

All Indicators Point Down

All the farm indicators are dropping: agriculture's share of GNP has steadily declined: from 32.3 percent in 1960, it has fallen to 20.4 in 1977, 11.890 in 1972 (3,961 million DH) and to 11 percent in 1983 (3,720 million DH). Measured in value added, the decline was 6 percent last year (7). And among these figures cereal grains show the biggest drop, obviously, because at the production level it was 27.2 percent over 4 years, and at the yield level it was 33.9 percent, again over 4 years (8). As a result, the amounts of cereal grains imported have risen, on a yearly average, from 2.9 million qx in 1960/64 to 4.9 million qx in 1965/69, to 6.5 million qx in 1970/74 to 14.3 million qx in 1975/79 to 20.7 million qx in 1980/83, with the visible consequences to the nation's finances and the state of its trade balance.

One could blame the entire situation on the drought and on the increasingly untenable situation of the uncultivated regions, where the main effort must absolutely be directed. We shall have to go farther than that, though, and all the experts agree that it would be possible to increase productivity and hence production by establishing a genuine cereal-grain strategy and creating integrated development zones (9).

Better soil preparation, along with increased use of farm machinery, could also prove salutary. One experiment (10) recently demonstrated that it would be possible, in the uncultivated areas, to grow 30 to 57 qx per hectare provided early plowing was done, the soil properly loosened and all necessary care given it. This experiment got endorsement from tests conducted by the French National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA), where barley yields came to 29.5 qx per hectare, hard wheat to 23 qx per ha., and soft wheat to 31.4 to 57.8 qx per ha., as against mean annual yields of 6 qx per hectare, which we are seeing currently.

Is anybody seriously concerned with these reclamation zones? The FAO has conducted numerous studies and proved repeatedly that grain production there could be increased by 60 percent. We must not forget, however, that while the State has made enormous investments in agriculture, 57 percent of those investments went into irrigation. Several years have already elapsed since the government announced a change in priorities, but the record fails to bear that out.

Mechanization, furthermore, is still in its long-standing embryonic state: according to some farm implement companies, purchases have declined by 30 to 40 percent, mainly in combines (- 35%), while according to others tractor purchases are holding steady at around 2,400 per year, owing mainly to the fact that bank loan standards do not allow sufficient consideration of mechanization as valuable per se. This sort of trend is barely sufficient to cover the cost of machinery replacement (the useful life of a tractor is around 10 years). Here again, we run into a situation well short of the potential, with possibilities for expansion unrealized and a policy stubbornly deaf to anything that does not call for irrigation.

The situation in cattle-raising is a copy of the one that prevails in grain farming. Savagely hit by the drought, the herd has dropped from 23,000 head in 1979 to 16,270 in 1982 and to 15,650 in 1983, for a further drop of 3.7 percent in a single year. The disaster of course struck hardest at sheep and goats, which make up the majority of our flocks and herds, but a million head of native beef cattle (plus 50,000 head of imported breeds) paid the price of these years of drought, during which meat production nevertheless hit 354,000 tons, 120,000 tons of which was white meat, meaning chicken. Right now, the herd is building again and it is hoped that it will reach 19,000 head by the end of this year (11). We see the same phenomenon of attrition and decline in vegetable oil production. Although production of sunflower oil in 1982/83 reached 157,600 qx (8 per ha), and peanut oil output came to 315,800 qx, or 13.6 qx per ha), and although our olive groves managed to produce 2,322,400 qx of olives, 90 percent of our needs must still be met by imports, at costs that, in 1982, came to 640.5 M DH. Of course, consumption has risen considerably: it has risen from 65,000 tons for seed-oils alone in 1970 to 180,000 tons in 1980, and in 1982 we had to import 192,000 tons of vegetable oils, mainly soybean oil (from the U.S.A.) and rape-seed oil to supply our local canneries (12).

Irrigation Holds Sway

Unfortunately, the same absurdity is being played out again: while sunflower-seed-oil production has doubled (there are 130,000 ha planted to this crop alone) and has now reached 35,000 tons as opposed to 12 to 13,000 tons before, and tests with safflower have shown promise, peanut production has not been developed, soybeans have not caught on despite lengthy and exhaustive studies, rape-seed is planted nowhere, and traditional oil crops such as argan (13) and especially olives, are reporting catastrophic harvests one year out of two and are not adequate to constitute any sort of industry. As a consequence, most of the olive-groves have gone untended, are neglected, and yield pitiful harvests; mechanization is out of the question and current harvesting procedures are so crude that they are killing the trees. This process has gone so far that harvests, which were very good in 1982 (14) were so bad in 1983 that for the first time we had to import oil from Tunisia to supply our canneries.

That makes 10 years at least since research began on an oil-seed plan which has yet to see the light of day, while countries like Greece, Tunisia, Spain, and Italy are reporting splendid results and there is actually a surplus of 400,000 tons on the world market. Meanwhile, Morocco's 14 oil pressers are working at 10-percent capacity with cottonseed (15) and sunflower seed, and at 90-percent capacity with soybeans and rape-seed imported from the United States and the EEC, when it isn't palm or palmetto nuts imported from Black Africa and Malaysia, products which must of course be paid for in dollars, which in turn weighs upon manufacturing costs which, to boot, have been calculated on the basis of theoretical operation of a decreed model plant and extended to all other plants.

There is, in fact, one single sector that has been given privileged status, and that is irrigation farming, which has yielded very good results not only in citrus and early-season vegetable crops but, most spectacularly, in sugarbeet yields (some 2.5 million per year)(16) and sugarcane (around 700,000 tons per year). These two plantations have given rise to 12 and soon 13 sugar refineries (17), which this year produced 427,200 tons of sugar (as compared with 361,498 tons last year) and which, although they face horrendous management and processing-cost problems which price their sugar at anywhere from 30 to 10 percent higher than the going rate on the world market, have enabled Morocco to produce -- according to the year -- 65 to 70 percent of the sugar it consumes, which in turn means hard-currency economies estimated at an average of 700 M DH per year. Even so, we had to import 246,600 tons of sugar in 1983 (270,000 tons in 1982), which cost, respectively, 518.6 and 412.8 M DH, and, since sugar consumption is now around 674,000 tons and is steadily mounting, it is imperative that we restore the sugar plan to achieve self-sufficiency, a challenge that, now posed, is at least possible in this area.

The reservoir dam policy is proving very helpful: while 15 small and medium retention dams to hold 2,500 cubic meters of water had been built from 1929 to 1967, as of that date a plan was announced calling for irrigation of 1 M hectares by the year 2000. Today, 32 dams are operating and two are under construction, with a combined capacity of 10,500 cubic meters and 550,000 hectares can thus be irrigated if the dams are also used to generate electric power (18) and to provide drinking water to the urban areas (19). The problem, however, is not only to equip the lands already brought under the plow (the record hitherto recorded is 25,000 hectares per year): it also includes smoothing out the short-term fluctuations induced by rainfall which, when there is any, is unpredictable (6.400 million) cubic meters are controlled this way, and, lastly, it includes making a start at inter-regional solidarity. Morocco can, in fact, be divided into three zones: North-Northwest (35 percent of the population, 46 percent of controllable water resources) which would get 2,100 liters per day, or more than half the nation's water which comes to 1,600 liters per day and which could thus transfer some of its surplus to other zones; the semi-arid Center-West (46 percent of the population, 36 percent of the

water resources), half of which is 1,300 liters per day and hence inadequate when you are talking about the most populous and the most highly industrialized region in the country; and the region of the East and the Atlas (19 percent of the population and 18 percent of the water resources), which could get 1,600 liters per day per capita if all resources were mobilized. This is why the dam policy is now joined with a canal policy, under which the Rocate River Canal in the Marrakech region will be reactivated, and another is planned: the Tadla-Tessaout canal, 93 kilometers long, which will transfer 235 M cubic meters from Bin el Ouidane to the downstream Tessaout (with international financing); and another will be started with the diversion of 15 kilometers of the waters of the Sebou to the Innaouene to power several hydroelectric plants (French financing).

At the purely agricultural level, 800,000 hectares are now classed as irrigated or irrigable (this is never a very precise estimate) since 250,000 ha already are served by small or medium dams, a solution which is preferred by the experts who estimate that we should be providing 2 M of reclamation lands with water supplies in order to meet our cereal grain requirements unless we want to see drought and shortages, and this does not exclude the intensive ground-breaking and plowing planned in 1984 over 1 M ha.

Strategy Switch?

The reason is that it no longer looks like a paying proposition to expand crops for export. There is growing awareness of the need for a change in strategy, in that the expansion of the Common Market will inevitably exacerbate the already declining levels of absorption for Moroccan products. This trend is still partially masked at present by the rise in prices, but it is already clear that if 960,000 tons of citrus fruits are produced, only 541,208 are exported (as against 859,000 in 1980), although 400,000 ha are earmarked for just such speculative production. The same trend is emerging for market farming, which occupied 143,000 to 150,000 ha in 1983: if 355,000 tons of tomatoes were grown, only 69,000 found an export outlet last year, as compared with 253,000 in 1980. The same goes for potatoes -- 572,000 tons produced -- and onions (230,000 tons). As for canned fruits and vegetables, while their prices have held firm, exports of such products, including wines, dropped by 16.3 percent: from 113,343 tons in 1982 to 94,845 in 1983.

One could say that while the drought was to blame for the grain failures, the EEC is at the root of the problems besetting citrus fruits and early-season garden truck. The explanation, however, in both instances, falls something short of complete: after all, you ought to have learned to live with a drought that has been a historic constant in Morocco, running in 7-year cycles, four or five of which are severe, and besides, the expansion of the EEC has been expected for quite some time. The fact is that it is

policy options that are now at issue, since the state has built itself a huge instrument for intervention in the form of an Agriculture Ministry which employs 43,000 officials. As one exasperated industry spokesman put it: "While French agriculture produces 50 to 60 times as much as Morocco's and exports 60 percent of what it grows, its ministry gets along with 23,000 officials. Proportionally speaking, it would take 1.5 million officials to man the French Agriculture Ministry alone!"

What are they all doing, these ubiquitous officials, for the technical assistants, accounting for 10 to 15 percent of the payroll, while extension services have ground to a halt, clustered mainly in offices in Rabat, where, year after year, every graduating class from the agricultural engineers' school swarms-- and routinely etiolates? One industry spokesman has an answer: "They form the cadres in agribusiness. We work with what we are handed, at the behest of an administration breathing down our necks," controlling investments, expansion, modernization -- arbitrarily approving or rejecting; they control our stocks, all prices for whatever comes into or leaves our plant gates, and set the quotas to which we must work -- quotas on everything, for domestic or imported oils, for cattle-feed, for bran, for flour, for cookie-dough batter, etc., etc. -- controls at every level and every stage of every process, to the point where they force us to answer questionnaires and fill out status reports every 2 weeks..."

This agribusiness on which so much effort now centers, and in which, incidentally, some very large corporations are investing (20) is working these days in response to controls, restrictions, and subsidies. By way of example: with the wholesale price of oil pegged at 6 DH per liter and the retail price fixed at 11 DH, the state must kick back to the 14 local oil pressers 5 DH per liter. The same goes for wheat delivered to the mills at 148 DH per quintal, which must be sold as flour after milling at 112 DH per qx, plus a bagging surcharge of 10.50 DH per quintal, with the state picking up the tab for the difference. Is it doing this on a timely basis? Industry people frown on the whole business, talk of customs officers, of stamping out fraud, of a biased legislation, at a time when such legislation has changed in Europe, and of an outdated quota system more than 10 years old which has not made an iota of change. Others claim that a whirlwind of liberalization will sweep them away, and that the issue from now on must be an end to price fixing, or, at least, that prices not be set for certain products that have been controlled for 2 years. All witnesses cite the tight market for pastry dough (21) or for chocolate, the multiplication of [production] units, particularly in milling (22); all evince anger at what they see as rank discrimination against a sector of the economy which, after all, provides permanent jobs for 34,964 workers (each job costs 41,797 DH), and whose contribution to the national economy in 1983 increased by 11 percent. The production index in fact rose from 193 in 1982 to 202 in 1983, and it is true that since the structural changes in the OEC a wave of conversion to private ownership has rolled over the agricultural sector, affecting even the Agricultural Development Company (SODEA) farms.

Challenges

There is ample evidence, even now, that some of the 23,000 recipients of land grants (organized into 700 cooperatives) to parts of the 300,000 hectares of communal lands have been deprived of their rights because they have failed to fulfill the pledges they had signed with regard to utilization of their lands and because of the recent decision to exempt farmers in this category from all taxation until the year 2000 (23). Given these conditions, could agriculture, particularly cereal-grain-growers, the major segment, have managed the hoped-for reconversion and met the targets (make that challenge) of self-sufficiency in all farm products? Maybe it would have been better to look more closely at the underlying problem before turning to the land-tenure problem, barring the admission, steadfastly resisted, that the surplus rural population is still flooding the urban areas? As of this moment, 23 percent of our farmers have no land and 50 percent of them have tiny plots that are at best widely scattered into as many as an average of 6 plots of less than 5 hectares apiece. To put it another way, of the 1.9 million farmers shown on the census, 2.8 percent have 33.6 percent of the land, 17 percent hold 42 percent of the farmlands: they are the large and medium operators who have been and still are offered a whole string of incentives and privileges; 56 percent of them hold 24.5 percent of the land. It is situations like these (24) that fuel the rural exodus, and we need new land-use and land-ownership laws, even though we all know that this would not necessarily bring about an economic solution, if only by reason of the advance of household consumption and of rural consumption. Yet, can we realistically hope for changes in farm production when the per-capita share of arable lands which was 1.1 hectare in 1965 had dropped to 0.46 by 1975 and will not even top 0.21 ha by the year 2000, and so long as the nation's economy cannot absorb more than 100,000 new job-seekers per year?

If the economic solution prevails, and if we look at the way we have thus far managed to implement it by the establishment, with government backing (by means of tax breaks or other devices), of a farm bourgeoisie that is, furthermore, fast becoming far more "big" than "middle," we must face the fact that the population surplus is going to flow increasingly into the cities and that this country's future -- at least when it comes to employment -- lies in opting for industrialization.

In short, agriculture is one of the toughest dilemmas facing this country. The experts, however, are still convinced that this economic and social sector could, even so, eventually become a productive sector capable of feeding the country and contributing to its GNP, if only management procedures could be improved and provided that the peasants, whatever happens, are not all driven off the land and that only the big landowners share the fertile farmlands among themselves. There you have a challenge that is at least as great, if not greater than the challenge of self-sufficiency: our ability to feed our own.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Given the requirement of 260 kilos per year and per capita for 25 M people, necessary consumption comes to 65 M quintals this year, which means we shall obviously have to import more than 30 M quintals.
- (2) Agricultural exports (mainly citrus products -- 1,102.2 M DH in 1983), early garden vegetables -- 451.8 M DH, canned fruits and vegetables (57.1 M DH), and bird-seed -- 13.8 M DH) pay for only 60 percent of our imports of farm products, and of the total, wheat alone accounts for 1834 M DH (as compared with 1444 M DH in 1982), or 48 percent of the total farm products bill, while sugar takes another 412.6 M DH, dairy products 357.1 M DH, tea 268 M DH, and coffee 109 M DH. The total value of imported farm products, including tobacco, came to 3,726.3 M DH in 1983, or 15 percent of total imports.
- (3) 10,000 tons of wheat was recently offered by the EEC at a price of 1.6 Md centimes.
- (4) From 1950 to 1955, cereal grain consumption was reportedly 400 kilos per year per capita, but dropped to between 230 and 220 kilos per year per capita during the seventies. Some international standards say that adequate consumption would require 300 kilos per year per capita.
- (5) This was 23.9 percent more in 1982/83 than in the preceding year's 2745.9 tons. However, at the same time the yields were declining from 7.5 to 6.8 qx per hectare. This year, with production of 2,852 tons, we will get an average of 7 qx per hectare. All told, 400,000 hectares are planted to legumes.
- (6) This year's barley crop should be good, because there have been some shipments to Senegal.
- (7) According to Cedies [expansion unknown], this added value derived from grains (36 percent), cattle-feed (32 percent), fruits (11 percent), vegetables (11 percent) and 10 percent from profits on speculation. Additionally, this issue of the Moroccan General Economic Federation (CGEM) reported agriculture's contribution to GNP for August as 16.7 percent, as against 21 percent in 1969-1974.
- (8) While cereal grains were planted on 4.5 M ha of the 7.7 M ha of Morocco's arable land, which includes some 2 M ha of land left fallow, as against 5 M ha of forest, 2.6 M ha of esparto grass, and 20.9 M ha of common pastureage.

- (9) Three have already been established, at El Hajeb, Karia-Tissa, and Oulmes-Rommani. The idea is to improve soil and roads, to provide watering places and a social infrastructure, to help with equipment and extension services and organize groups of peasants and cooperatives.
- (10) Two successive issues of LA VIE ECONOMIQUE reported on an experiment mounted by M. Ayello with wheat at Oulmes and with barley at Berrechid. Aware of the drawbacks of cultivation, which is routinely put off until too late, this expert has developed a decompactor that works 60 cm beneath the surface of the soil without disturbing the surface, and hence without turning over the fertile layer. Using this device in the collective areas, he is getting 20 qx per ha from land that got only 200 mm of rainfall, and 80-qx yields where there is 700 mm of rainfall per year.
- (11) 110,000 ha are planted to forage crops, however.
- (12) Oil consumption is running at about 10 liters per year per person, and amounts to 200,000 tons of cooking oil and 20 to 25,000 tons of olive oil.
- (13) Argan oil boasts some desirable qualities, but it does not keep or travel well, and cannot be produced or marketed on an industrial scale, whereas olive oil can, albeit with considerable difficulty.
- (14) We have managed to produce more than 2 M tons of olives.
- (15) Cotton yields run at around 781.8 qx per ha, which are by all odds the best going, but only 240 tons are grown.
- (16) Yields are on the order of 390.2 qx per hectare.
- (17) They provide 7,055 permanent jobs plus 3,000 seasonal jobs.
- (18) This is the way we get 30 percent of our electricity, but we must use coal for 40 percent and imported fuel oil for 30 percent, thereby doubling our capacity, which requires very onerous investments.
- (19) The drinking water supply has risen in 25 years from 80 M cubic meters per year to 700 M cubic meters per year. the dams produce 60 percent of it, and that share is slated to grow.
- (20) One of them has just bought the French Felix Potin company, complete with all 1,500 of its food-product distribution outlets.

- (21) 306 small businesses, 4000 jobs, sales of 150 tons of cookies each month, while the couscous market is expanding and the pasta market slowing, with a current level of 2 kilos per year per capita, as opposed to 6 kilos of French and 30 kilos of Italian pasta. The reason Moroccan pasta is of poor quality is that it is made with soft wheat, instead of the proper hard wheat, less and less of which is being grown each year, and every grain of which is consumed where it is grown.
- (22) A few big companies, a swarm of little mills, between 1.7 and 2.2 M qx each month, which works out to 65 percent of consumption, 95 of which is soft wheat.
- (23) Even so, one might underscore the fact that the outline law promulgated on 23 April 1984 makes the farm tax structure a tool for providing incentives for production, such as exempting earnings derived from cattle-breeding, while taxes on earnings from cereal grains, vegetable oil crops, sugar mills, forage crops, and cotton mills will be set by law at some later date. Farming operations whose volume of business is in excess of 2 MDH will be subject to taxation on actual earnings, while the rest will be taxed on a contractual basis. A land tax of 1 to 5 DH per hectare will also be enacted.
- (24) According to Cedies, 74 percent of Moroccan farms are less than 5 hectares in extent (24 percent of the farm area), 23 percent cover 5 to 20 hectares (42 percent of the total), 23 percent cover 20 to 50 hectares (17 percent of the total), and 0.7 percent extend to more than 50 hectares (17 percent of total farmland).

0182

CS0: 4519/23

CHEVRON, AMERICAN ROLE IN SUDAN CRITICIZED

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic No 343, 8 Oct 84 pp 34-38

[Article: "'Chevron' Government in Sudan']

[Text] The nerve center of the American role in Sudan now is the Chevron company, which amounts to a powerful state within the fragile state, especially following the regime's deepening crisis and in spite of the halt to exploration operations, something which has boosted the company's political role. The Ministry of Energy and Mining is undoubtedly a Trojan horse and a cover for this role, and the minister of energy and mining himself has the equivalent of the role of American high commissioner in Sudan.

Sudanese Minister of Energy and Mining Dr. Sharif al-Tuhami is not an example of this country's own shining cadres. Numayri appointed him minister in order to grace the regime with him; instead, it soils him, as has happened to many others. In fact, he rose to his post after the national reconciliation settlement as a representative of Sadiq al-Mahdi. In the minds of many he remains a representative of Sadiq in the regime. Sadiq did not get his share in the national reconciliation program; he revolted against the regime and moved covertly to get revenge or to knock hard again at the regime's door from the opposition trench, and so he was imprisoned. Only the Western press followed his arrest; in Sudan, his imprisonment did not stir up his power base, which is large only in his own imagination. Sharif al-Tuhami nevertheless remained in his post and people were amazed; the only plausible explanation was that al-Tuhami had an American role in the regime. This explanation found acceptance here because al-Tuhami's link with Sadiq is not really inconsistent with his American role; nor is the link with both sides inconsistent with his presence in the regime, especially since accommodation between what al-Sadiq wants from the reconciliation settlement, and Numayri, who cannot bear to share his dictatorship with anyone, is still a difficult equation. It is an American illusion, which needs middlemen who are equally acceptable to both Numayri and al-Sadiq. Now many indications apparently point to America's great despair over its ability to patch up the regime, reform it, and expand its base. America is afraid that the regime's crisis will lead to its coming under the control of an independent alternative with whom it would be difficult to reach an understanding, and so it rushed to arrange an alternative to rescue the regime.

Within this context, what do Chevron, the Ministry of Energy and Dr al-Tuhami represent and who will become America's alternative in Sudan?

In order to answer the first question comprehensively, the American role and presence role in the energy establishments in Sudan must be known, especially since this role and this presence, both qualitatively and quantitatively, are an important link in the total American plan in Sudan.

I. The Chevron Company.

1. The concession:

The concession granted to Chevron hurts Sudan - this will be dealt with later. It also covers a wide area in view of the fact that some other companies; concessions are part of its share. The four other companies working in conjunction with it are simply middlemen and additional masks for Chevron, which is the one that has actually drilled exploratory wells in its name in order to maintain the facade that it is meeting its contractual obligations. Moreover, Chevron's actions vis-a-vis the other competing western companies suggests that it is the only company America can rely on to deal with the petroleum wealth and exercise economic and political control over Sudan. In the same context, British participation also recently came in support of the American role, and especially in regard to southern Sudan.

2. The economic benefit:

The economic benefit of Chevron's operations, from the standpoint of results, is not on a par with the propaganda noise the regime is making and which portrays petroleum as if it were going to gush forth to sweep away all the regime's woes, while the facts attest that Chevron is striving to make the regime's nose wallow in its oil.

a. The regime's oil indebtedness has reached between \$7 or 8 billion so far and the number of wells drilled before the company halted operations was less than 70, most of the producing ones yielding 12,000 barrels a day. In some 50 of these wells the results were frustrating and some contained only gas or only non-commercial quantities. The important thing is that expected production is limited to 100,000 barrels per day. That does not mean that Sudan will export this quantity, because this is the theoretical maximum capacity of the planned pipeline. This means that actual export will be less than this quantity. It also means, even if we suppose the impossible premise that the pipeline will run at its planned capacity, that it will be 17 to 20 years before Sudan's share of exported petroleum will cover the debt incurred of extracting it.

b. Because it feared this debt, the Chevron company cancelled the Kusti refinery project and made the regime's transfer of all oil outside Sudan a fait accompli. This guarantees for it the recovery of installment payments on debts for what it spent on extraction. But it proposes to the regime also the debt of financing the pipeline and depriving it of the petroleum derivative products it requires. Thus petroleum began reducing sovereignty, and it became a curse, not a blessing.

c. As a result of the cancellation of the Kusti refinery, the cement plant project became an uneconomic project, because it would have relied primarily on derivative products from the Kusti refinery. This project, whose buildings were put together in al-Shajara, was expected to be completed at a cost of \$1.5 to 2 billion. This was also the case with the depots project, which was under way, and the asphalt project, which was started up in Port Sudan under a Sudanese-Romanian contract.

d. In regard to the pipeline, the regime acted quickly on the basis of promises which it had received. In 1975 it announced a date for the completion of the pipeline. As a result of bribes, France and The Netherlands were unlikely to bid, and the bribetakers chose the highest bid. This is what the world media dealt with, referring to a letter from the Dutch company to the regime exposing the amount of the bribe and reminding the bribetakers that The Netherlands had offered a grant to Sudan amounting to \$40 million; consequently, it did not deserve this treatment. After all this it became clear that this line, in the event it is completed, would need ten pumping stations requiring that Sudan participate with Chevron in providing 27,000 barrels of gasoline to operate them. Sudan has proposed operating a small refinery in Kusti to provide gasoline to operate the pumps to send the oil to Port Sudan, but the company which won the bid was a commercial company with no experience or specialization in the area of the contract which it took on, so it sold its contract to another company and went into the financing end. Secondary contractors, companies, and financiers multiplied. The most important of these was South Korea, or more precisely America with a South Korean mask, to do the work on the pipeline also.

e. In spite of heavy indebtedness, Sudan derived limited benefit from money spent by Chevron because Chevron hires for purposes of controlling. It does this not just through heavy indebtedness but also by what is spent on peripheral activity associated with exploration and drilling, in accordance with a studied plan for expanding the circle of American influence in Sudan.

3. Aspects of Expenditure:

a. The basic expenses are on drilling and exploration, i.e. on moving, setting up, operating, and maintaining machinery. The strange part of this is that this huge expense, which is measured in billions, is all spent for only four rigs. That is the total number of rigs in Sudan; they are owned by Chevron and they drill for its other contracting front companies also.

b. Expenditures for experts. Their salaries naturally are huge but they spend only limited amounts of it inside Sudan. Laws protecting their concessions are applied, such as the law of hardship duty including its many privileges for travel tickets every three months and their allowances, etc.

c. Local expenditure is used to expand the base of American contacts and relations in Sudan.

i. The leasing of housing for American experts living in Sudan, i.e. the capital, runs an average of 3,000 or 4,000 pounds a month, in addition to three buildings which are treated like an "American ghetto" in a first class compound. Half the houses of compounds and quarters are leased to foreigners, especially Americans.

ii. Visiting experts. Under the rights of the contract, they deal with the private sector and personnel providing such services as leasing houses and vehicles (80 pounds a day). They also deal with some Sudanese cadres in important state offices and have them conduct many studies, some of which have no connection with Chevron's work, for work fees and travel fees, if the study requires travel to outlying areas (between 40 and 60 pounds a day.)

iii. Conversion from dollars to pounds of currencies which are spent is done through new American banks with Sudanese fronts.

All of this expenditure, which hurts Sudan, is what in the end will lead to an accumulation of debts against the future of the country. Perhaps the real expenditure is small since the uranium stolen by Chevron is double that amount.

4. Organic American Presence

More than 500 American experts working in the Chevron company and the organizations under it live under the cover of running only four rigs. Most of them reside in the capital.

The company employs about 150 Sudanese employees most of them in administrative and secretarial work and services, etc. There are also temporary workers, and the company employs non-American workers at minimum wages and in a system of contracts according to need, i.e. day-to-day workers without guarantees. In employing manpower it prefers not to accumulate expertise. It also prefers to select its manpower from non-Sudanese, that is from imported workers. Of these, they prefer a special kind on whom they bet.

II. The Ministry of Energy and Mining.

The American influence and presence in this ministry is not interested in its organizations, such as the National Electricity Corporation, the National Water Administration and the Geology

Bureau, except when it comes to collecting studies for future purposes. As for the offices lucky enough to enjoy the interest of this nest, thanks to the minister of energy, they are the National Energy Administration and the White Nile Pipeline Company in addition to interest of another type in the General Petroleum Organization.

1. National Energy Administration

a. This was an organization established primarily on foreign instructions. It is linked to the minister and he continues to run it through six American experts sent as envoys from an American [sic] company called International Energy Development Company (IED) and their salaries are paid by it. Every expenditure is under this cover. The expenditure is rumored to be directed and supervised by Chevron.

c. [sic] For financial reasons, the regime closed down embassies and stopped sending out government educational missions several years ago, and in fact cut off missions in progress for Sudanese cadres, most of whom were on the verge of completing their higher studies. Despite all this, however, the missions to America for the Ministry of Energy's employees, under the cover of American aid, continued and covered almost all workers in the National Energy Administration and the General Petroleum Organization. Most of these missions are short (a week to 4 months) and some workers go more than once. The programs are recreational; they include intensive trips to the United States and seminars on social life in America, and so forth.

d. Salaries of workers in the ministry are minimal, just like the entrance level in Sudan. However IED devised other channels of income for some workers: an system of unlimited incentives in the event studies or translations are ordered as needed, including travel (with allowances) to field sites to research the information. This system of incentives finds bold resistance from many of the workers who were alerted to their hidden purposes.

e. A number of visiting experts frequently come to the ministry, and the workers were alerted to the fact that these were neither technicians, economists nor statisticians, and they were also surprised because these visitors were urging and enticing some of the workers to carry out studies which had no bearing on their missions, such as inflation, the black market, and ideas for getting out of the political crisis. As for the experts residing here, they, by virtue of their positions supervise the Power IV project of the American [sic] Alexander Gibbs company and the Swedish hydro project. They are involved in everything, attend even routine administrative meetings of the ministry, and give their consultative views even on the activities of other, non-American, company.

5. The White Nile Company

This is a joint Sudan-Chevron venture and was established primarily to set up the Kusti refinery. It has now been given the responsibility for setting up the pipeline.

- The company's headquarters is a villa on a street housing the workers in the company.

- The Chairman of the board of directors is the minister of energy.

- The director general representing Sudan ('Abd al-Rahman Sulayman, the brother of Ahmad Sulayman) resides in America with his family and continued to have them reside in the United States even after the cancellation of the Kusti refinery, although the reason he was sent there was to be trained to manage the refinery. Meanwhile, we find the American director representing Chevron residing at the company headquarters in Khartoum. This is aside from the fact that the company, after it was given responsibility for the pipeline, did not do anything worth mentioning.

6. General Petroleum Corporation

If there is any benefit to foreign interference, this benefit is offset by its success in paralyzing this corporation's capabilities. Consequently, this corporation's role now is limited because of the absence of a national role here. The corporation is under the control of both the ministry and Chevron and its missions so far have been limited to managing the old pipelines and helping to run the Port Sudan refinery. Other missions include exploration projects under study as well as other studies and a small experimental project to extract gas from organic waste, a project which can benefit the United States more than Sudan. The one serious project it has is the asphalt project which is a Romanian project with good conditions, but it is encountering many difficulties because of Chevron and the regime.

As for the cement plant project, a U.S. project which cost more than \$1.5 billion to complete, its buildings were completed and its equipment was brought in. The factory buildings and Ahmad Sulayman (the attorney), the chairman of the board of directors, are still waiting for a solution to the impossible obstacles, the obstacle of financing and the problem of raw materials following the cancellation of the Kusti refinery.

III. It is thus clear that the minister of energy in the Sudan is not his own man. The minister has really come to be a watchman guarding the Sudan's door of energy, through which only the United States can enter. France, which pushed its petroleum relations in Sudan in the direction of national participation by Sudan, was given the concession it wanted in about 300 square kilometers and did not undertake exploration because the regime did not act seriously to honor its commitments.

Similarly, the doors were deliberately shut in the faces of many countries, as happened with Sweden (as well as Japan, France and the Netherlands in regard to the pipeline). As for Sweden, it took advantage of a Swedish businessman sent from the United Nations as an expert to Sudan. He submitted a report which stressed that petroleum was promising in the Sudan and that the risk was magnified by Chevron to hurt Sudan. He also exposed secrets related to Chevron's activities in Ehtiopia and he submitted a Swedish exploration bid with better conditions; as an inducement he included the condition that Sweden furnish the Sudan with oil in exchange for Sudanese oil later on. He advised, as an expert, that Sudan might be able to bypass the Chevron agreement. The expert in the end became convinced that the regime, especially the ministry of energy, simply did not want anyone to participate except the United States.

It is therefore clear that this American energy nest in Sudan is a nest which serves all the other links, especially the jobs and deals it can garner for all those who turn their backs to the patriotic struggle (or to all those who still remain in this struggle), and so that the rest of the links can be guided by it. This applies to the visiting or permanent U.S. military presence as well as to the American presence in the form of American banks in Sudan, in U.S. embassies, attache offices, and the expertise found in the State Security Organization. The brains of the U.S. presence in the educational sector are intertwined with groups of intelligentsia in seminars in the parlors of the rich, in bridge clubs, etc.

Finally, when Khartoum announced to the world the huge Port Sudan to Cameroon pipeline deal with American financing amounting to 13 billion dollars, the local people wondered where the scandal was, because the regime had gotten them used to embellishing all of its deals with scandals. However, "Watergate" somewhat unnerved those who were impatient and did not give them much time. After Numayri was rumored to have been officially notified by Chevron that he had to accept al-Sadiq's conditions for the national reconciliation settlement, hold a dialogue with the rebels in the South, etc. as conditions for the return of its business as it was, he tried to scare America with the May Day stick. He went brandishing it from Bucharest - the window of the East in the West. It was if he were saying to the United States, "Get me before I sink into the mud." Can he, however, use his Islamization program, which he claims is the reason why the West, the United States, and some of the Arabs are angry with him, to persuade international Communism to rescue him? In any case, the American alternative also seeks to gain the friendship of the Sudanese Communist Party on the local level in order to close all windows on Numayri.

The quietest voices in the camp of the Sudanese right which did not participate in the reconciliation claim that the Communists were waiting to grab hold of anything at all which might rescue them, so they came up with their programs with all their conditions. The most radical voices in the same camp, however, believe that bringing the

Communists in under their oppositionist umbrella gives their alternative an opportunity to claim representation of all the people in order to resist the oppositionist Sudanese People's Grouping, which rejects tutelage from both the East and the West. All the forces linked with the Kremlin would stand together in one trench with those linked with Washington in confronting the growth of the independence forces. This is a type of attempt at international detente which prevails in the Third World, along with plans for military bases, fleets and maneuvers, as well as the division of sects, religions, tribes, regions, and so forth. It is the front which not unites the Iraqi Communist Party with those who speak at great length about its subservience to America and Israel, such as the Da'wa Party, the Barzanis in northern Iraq, and the so-called Supreme Islamic Council, which is against independence of the revolution in Iraq. This is not the first example of this procedure, and it is not the last. In short, the Sudanese right which did not participate in the national reconciliation, spurred by its link with the legacy of the regime, its ally, began the game of the old lion and sent in its foxes the likes of Dr Mansur Khalid to engineer the political framework for the new alternative. The Communists, who belatedly sensed the role of Mansur Khalid, the American stooge with his licenses, as they said in their pamphlets, decided to mobilize to extinguish his role, claiming that their front was not cut from the same cloth as he was. As for Mansur Khalid himself, he undoubtedly understands he is an intermediary whose task has ended. The important thing for him is the entry of the Communists into this broad front, especially since the front contains forces he feels confident will reward him and show him gratitude. Many intriguing details and facts remain which will form another topic later on, in response to the second question about the American alternative.

6945

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MAJOR OPPOSITION LEADER MAKES STATEMENT, HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE

Tunis AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 20 Oct 84 pp 3, 4, 9, 10

[Article: "The Statement Preparatory to the Press Conference: We Requested a Meeting with the Prime Minister But He Did Not Respond"]

[Text] In the name of God, the most merciful, the all-compassionate:

Ladies and gentlemen, our honored guests:

I welcome you all and thank you for being so gracious as to respond to our invitation. I might single out for mention the gentlemen who represent the opposition parties, the League of Human Rights and foreign and Tunisian journalists, representatives of the domestic and foreign press and the news agencies.

I invited you to attend in the name of the Movement of Social Democrats to draw your attention to a number of important and serious events and developments which have occurred recently, during the past weeks, on the political stage. These, in our opinion, do not just concern our party, but also concern the other opposition movements and in general are related to the country's political situation.

1. Our party, and there is no doubt that you are aware of this, has, since last summer, been exposed to a series of acts of violent aggression which were aimed at its fighting men and acts of arson against its clubs in numerous areas of the republic, in Zarzis in the south, Sers in Kef Governorate, Bir Choukat and Bir Ali Ben Khalifa in the Sfax area, Msaken in the Sahel, the suburb of Ezzahra in the southern section of the capital, and finally in Fernana and Babouch in Jendouba. At the outset we did not attach importance to these events and considered that they were isolated in terms of time and place, in effect a coincidence resulting from the local conduct of some people "who have not been given the word" as it is said. We truly believed that there were some arbitrary obstacles or more accurately some complexes which we could transcend with some patience and flexibility, so that we could facilitate the process of moving through and assimilating the democratic course of action on some people's behalf. Proceeding from that, we made a trip last summer around a number of areas in the territory of the republic,

avoided holding public meetings and got in touch with members and fighting people in our party in special meetings in closed shops. However, in spite of that, we were subjected to acts of conspiracy which were carried out by personnel motivated by some officials in the ruling party to ruin these meetings by illegitimate means, such as gathering around the headquarters of the meeting and trying to enter it by force, conducting violent aggression against those in attendance, breaking down the door and burning down the place, as happened in Zarzis, Sousse and Msaken.

We found some difficulty in convincing our fighting men to restrain themselves and not respond to these acts of aggression in kind, which they could do. We may fail to convince them if these acts of aggression are repeated in the future. It is necessary to mention what happened before that, from the time we obtained the permit, in the form of the placing of various legal and illegal obstacles before us and the exertion of various forms of pressure on fighting men, even on citizens who deal with us in the context of the law. For instance, the owners of shops, who leased those out to us so that we could open groups and branches, were on most occasions summoned by the police or the guards, or the delegate and coordinating committee, and were threatened in order to prevail on them to abrogate the leases. We will not, on top of this, mention the different kinds of pressure and wrangles to which our fighting men have been exposed every day. One person is transferred from his position, if he is a government employee, fines are imposed on another person, the necessary permit, without which he cannot continue his occupational activity and work for the sake of his daily sustenance, is withdrawn from yet another one, or from his brother, and what happens to a fourth is like what happened in Siliana to our brother the national council member who was subjected to an act of violent aggression by a group from the branch in the locality, from whom his briefcase, in which were the seals of our movements and a group of publications, was forcibly removed. Let us not forget, in addition to that, the numerous diverse difficulties our newspaper and the newspapers of the opposition in general encounter in being issued, in being sold, in being distributed and in obtaining paper and the impossibility of obtaining advertising. After all that, we came to believe that these acts and practices, by their repetition and continuation, were not isolated in terms of place and time, especially since they included other opposition movements, including the two parties that are legally recognized along with ours, the Communist and Popular Unity Parties. We now no longer doubt that they lie within an organized, conspiratorial plan for which the ruling party bears the responsibility at the level of the leadership and the government, which is assigned vigilantly to maintain order and has the means to guarantee the exercise of public freedoms and apply the law to all citizens, especially the penal code, which punishes anyone who deliberately sets fire to an inhabited building by hard labor. We without hesitation accuse some personnel in the ruling party of provoking some of their myrmidons to carry out acts of arson, safe from prosecution by the judiciary. Of course, on every occasion we have gone through the necessary measures with the police and the courts, but without result; we have also made direct and indirect attempts in the political area with officials in the Destourian Socialist Party and the government to draw their attention to the gravity of these acts and the need to put a limit to them. That has been without avail. Finally, and I am informing you of this, for this purpose I requested a

meeting for a delegation from our party with Mr Mohamed Mzali, in his three capacities and prime minister, minister of the interior and secretary general of the Destourian Socialist Party.

However, a week after sending the request, we were informed by his office that it was not feasible for him to set an appointment before his trip abroad because of his numerous jobs and commitments. I can leave it to you to judge this situation. As far as I am concerned, I can find no logical explanation for it except a disinclination to bear responsibility.

We consider all of the persons in the ruling party responsible, because they have not done anything to stop the current of violence, and have not even been able to declare their condemnation and back up what they said in private interviews with some brothers who talked to them about the subject.

2. In addition to these vile acts and practices, we have in the recent period observed a perceptible change in the tone and content of the political speeches issued by the people in the regime. Talk about democracy has become rare, the words "pluralism," "the presence of a number of parties" and "the opposition" have been totally, or nearly, removed from the official language, and only talk about the party remains, the single unique party, of course, its historic mission, the fact that it alone is qualified to lead the country and no citizen can bear responsibility in the system of the government unless he is enrolled in it and devoted to its programs. This sort of talk was uttered in a meeting held in the headquarters of the party which included the presidents and directors general of national companies of a commercial and industrial character. To that I might add what was said to the effect that the municipality is a cell of the party and what was said recently at a meeting which included the directors of secondary institutes under the chairmanship of the prime minister, in the presence of the director of the Destourian Socialist Party, regarding the concentration of the party's School Youth [organization] in secondary institutes. We are opposed to the "politicization" of school institutes and therefore we call on guardians to prevent their children from entering this organization and we call on the government to retreat from this decision. If it insists on it, we will be compelled, with the other movements of the opposition, to hold meetings with the pupils outside the institutes and urge them to revive independent organizations speaking in their names.

Last but not least, we have heard statements most clearly on the radio and television which were made at the conclusion of the activities of the central committee of the Destourian Socialist Party whose gist was "There is only the party of Bourguiba."

This expression was softened in the press, and became "The party must enjoy the central position in the coming elections."

3. As we link acts and daily practice, on the one hand, with political statements and positions on the other, we find, in comparing them, proof of suspension of the course of democracy and a retreat from it in accordance with a conspiratorial plan. It has become apparent to us through experience and practice that the men in power were not serious about advocating the

system of pluralism, and we expressed our fears in this regard on the very day our movement obtained the permit. We have said on numerous occasions that we are not ready to play the role of a pretext to cover up a situation which is different from official speeches that are made for foreign consumption only.

It is obvious that this new situation, and the obvious rigidity it involves in the authorities' dealings with citizens of various groups, especially after the events of January 1984 and what is called the bread situation, do not concern the Movement of Socialist Democrats alone, but also concern all the forces of the opposition without exception, including those which have not yet received legal permits. They also concern all social and occupational organizations whose existence is connected to respect for human rights and public freedoms. In general, we mean all the living forces which believe in the need for change and are working on its behalf. Therefore, we have started to make regular contacts and meetings with the forces of the opposition that are present on the stage to consult with them on this situation and hold discussions on the possibility of adopting a common position on it.

4. While we believe that rigidity and retreat from the course of democracy is not the proper way out of the comprehensive crisis in which the country is stumbling economically, socially and politically, indeed that this road will lead inevitably to the aggravation of the crisis, and that the experience and events the country has gone through, among them the end of the seventies, have proved that the road of inflexibility is a dead end and its destiny is a final rupture between the masses of the people and the regime, and we do not believe that the regime will derive the lesson from the upheaval of the people which occurred at the beginning of this year and will proceed to remedy matters with a spirit of realism and political boldness, but that it has unfortunately chosen another road to gain time, no more and no less, while the profound illnesses our society is suffering from and the complicated problems posed to our country demand a serious, radical and comprehensive remedy:

We believe that the best way to emerge from the crisis and put the country on the proper course is to support the democratic course and deepen it. This requires:

First, the elimination of the general political atmosphere, by issuing a general legislative amnesty so that all Tunisians will be able to exercise their legitimate rights as citizens and contribute their share of domestic effort and the expatriates will be enabled to return to the nation confident in their freedom and their life.

Second, the organization of political life on sound bases by issuing the law on parties and changing the law on the press, while taking the recommendations of the Higher Information Council into consideration.

Third, the necessary consultation regarding the draft law on parties and the amendment of the law on the press might be a rich occasion for opening a comprehensive national dialogue aimed at approving the bases on which the national reconciliation will be concentrated in order to preserve the

country's independence and immunity and guarantee its progress toward material and moral advancement.

We believe, more than at any time in the past, that only a pluralistic democratic system will guarantee that real political stability is insured and Tunisian independence is supported, so that it will be safe from foreign designs and will not need protection or tutelage from any place, and that it is also the best way, as far as Tunisia goes, for emerging from backwardness, realizing justice and socialism, and catching up to the cavalcade of the advanced, modern countries.

Following this statement, an opportunity was presented for questions and requests for information from journalist colleagues and our brother Ahmed Mestiri, the secretary general of our movement, proceeded to answer them.

Mrs Matthews:

I would like to know how many representatives of opposition parties are in attendance here today. In your comments, mention was made of the name of Ahmed Ben Salah; this does not appear in the text. Do you through your joint action with the opposition parties intend to open a comprehensive dialogue with the government?

Ahmed Mestiri: As regards the first part of your question, on the opposition party representatives in attendance at the press conference today, beside me there are Messrs Abdelhamid Ben Mustafa of the Communist Party, Abdel Kadir Chabbi and Hafnaoui Amairia of the Socialist Grouping, and Dr Hachem Ayari of the League of Human Rights.

As regards the second part, I did indeed mention the name of Mr Ahmed Ben Salah as an example as far as Tunisians living in exile because of their ideas and political affiliations are concerned. We are asking that they come back to the homeland in the context of a general legislative amnesty.

As regards the third part, we took the initiative of making contacts and meetings with the opposition parties. These are underway and have not ended. In the course of them, an exchange of views and analyses on the current political situation took place, a study was made of bilateral relations with all parties and the possibility of adopting common positions by which the opposition movements could deal with the latest developments on the political stage in the country was explored.

AL-RA'Y newspaper:

In your statement, you addressed yourself to the recent events which have occurred and stated that they occurred as the result of provocation on the part of some officials in the ruling party. Could one learn about these officials? You asked for a meeting with Mr Mohamed Mzali, the prime minister. Why didn't you ask for a meeting with the president directly?

Ahmed Mestiri: The people who carried out the acts of arson and beatings at least received the green light either from the regional authorities or from

entities in the capital. In this regard, we sometimes wonder how these sorts of events occurred and continued when officials at the highest level in the ruling party and the government knew about them. We are sure that many of these officials in the government and the Destourian Socialist Party, in their own spirits, do not encourage these methods and condemn them, and some of them, I do not want to give names, have expressed their displeasure secretly and in private conversations. However, when they were asked to express this condemnation openly, they refrained; as is said, "The law rules on the surface."

So far, we have not heard either a denial of these things and matters or an attempt to eliminate these acts by the party and the government, in the press or in the media, from any official body. Therefore we conclude that the officials at the highest level are content with this conduct; silence over this situation is a sort of indication of contentment, as it is said.

As regards the latter part, I will answer it as I answered it on numerous occasions in private meetings in the Movement of Socialist Democrats and in public.

We do not accept the explanation which holds that the president is unaware of what is going on in the country and that we have to inform him. He, by virtue of the constitution, practice and reality, is the person who takes the initiative to rule, he is the highest authority in the country and he is the highest person responsible for what his prime minister and ministers are doing. He is elected by the people, represents national sovereignty and is the symbol of the government. When we ask for a meeting with the prime minister, that is because we do not need to request a meeting with the president in person, through the knowledge on our part that the former is his prime minister, his right hand, the head of the government, the minister of the interior and the secretary general of the Destourian Socialist Party, meets daily with the president and is supposed to inform him of everything he hears.

We put these matters in the official context. If it were a matter of meeting with Mr Mohamed Mzali on a personal basis, the situation would be different. However, I wanted to meet him as part of a delegation from the Movement of Socialist Democrats in an official meeting. Therefore I requested a meeting from Mr Mohamed Mzali and not from the president.

Question: There is some asperity to the statements in your comments; that is, do you believe that this asperity is as a reaction to the latest forms of action, or have you decided to embark on a new course of struggle?

Amel Mestiri: If you encounter some asperity in my statement, that is your opinion, and I will not argue with you about it. However, if you believe, or deduce from my tone, that I intend to get into a clash or confrontation, I do not imagine that the intention is to do that. The text I read out to you, of which you have a copy, was for that purpose, so that my statement would not be interpreted, since I am restricted and bound to what I have presented to you in writing and also committed to what I said.

We do not change our tone according to circumstances, because the issue, as far as we are concerned, is not to change tone as a form of tactics. There is a state of affairs and an analysis which changes as it deals with actual conditions. Our deductions are derived from events and the state of affairs. The talk that we hear, for example, that I have learned about now, in confirmation of what I have said, in an interview which the magazine AL-TADAMUN held with the prime minister, giving prominence in large letters to a sentence "There is no distinction between the government and the party, and most Tunisians are Destourians," if only in the context of the interview, there are phrases which attempt to lighten this statement that "the course of democracy is still continuing, and he is anxious to implant it firmly." Would that that statement were becoming everyday practice and were founded in reality.

Hatem Chaabouni, AL-TARIQ AL-JADID:

The meeting between the prime minister and some independents produced a recommendation to get the Economic and Social Council functioning by making it a kind of framework for the national dialogue you talked about at the conclusion of your statement. Does your movement have a specific position on that, or what, in general, is your evaluation of this initiative, which could partially help the national dialogue?

Ahmed Mestiri: It is a valid question, but I will not keep it a secret from you that we do not attach importance to this recommendation, out of our knowledge that the Economic and Social Council is a consultative board whose members are appointed by the government. It is supposed to represent some professional organizations and people with a reputation in the area of the economy, and I do not know the fate of the reports this organization has been issuing for years. They are supposed to be given consideration. I know that on many occasions they are objective reports in which there is some criticism and advice, and they are not put into effect because it is a consultative board.

I say this because when I referred to the need to start the national dialogue, on the occasion of consultation over the law on parties and the law on the press, I meant that one of the things which have to be changed and amended is that the institutions of the government, in particular the elected ones in which political decisions are made, such as the municipalities, the Chamber of Deputies and so forth, which are a monopoly of the single party, have to be reformed. The first reform which comes to mind is the reform of these structures themselves at least in the current condition of the constitution. We accept them and do not dispute their legitimacy; the least that the opposition movements can demand is that they be present in positions of political decisionmaking in the municipalities which run and operate the affairs of local communities and in the Chamber of Deputies, the legislative body which approves the budget and the laws. One thing which ought to be ratified in the context of the current constitution is that the opposition should be enabled actually to enter these institutions, since when we talk about dialogue and the need to open one in all circumstances, in the context of the current law and the reforms and changes which must be introduced into the institutions, the dialogue ought to take place among the

people concerned with the matter -- the regime, the opposition parties and some of the professional and social organizations which have their standing and their views on the organization of public life. The League of Human Rights is concerned with the condition of human rights in Tunisia and is concerned with the state of union freedoms in Tunisia, and the Federation of Labor is concerned with the actual condition of the country in general.

If the government agrees to consult and adopt the views of all the parties concerned, at that point we can say that that will be the beginning of welfare and a precious opportunity to start a true national dialogue. We believe, and we have been saying this for years, in the need to define the limits of a national reconciliation over major matters, basic principles and goals which all Tunisians without exception will agree over, such as the need to preserve the independence and security of the Tunisian nation, condemn violence, affirm political interaction and preserve human rights and public freedoms. Everyone agrees over these things. They might disagree over other things, which is normal, for instance the definition of foreign policy and the economic and social field. We for example do not agree on everything with the brothers from opposition parties who are present here. We agree with them over things I have mentioned above and disagree with them over other things, but we do believe that if we define the scope of national reconciliation over these things it will be possible to conduct a dialogue over them, the arbitration by the people will hit upon the political option which they consider suitable, and it will be necessary to submit and respect their will.

This therefore is the notion of national dialogue.

Abdel Fattah, AL-NAJAH

Do you consider that these acts of aggression are directed against the opposition movements as a whole, as part of the atmosphere of the coming municipal elections, or that they are directed against your movement in particular, because the ruling party has felt that this movement has started to invade the areas where it is active, the rural areas which you have started to invade in concentrated form?

Abdel Madjid: I do not believe that the target of these acts of aggression is our movement alone, because I have not been assigned by the brothers who are present on behalf of the Communist Party and the Socialist Grouping to speak in their name, but, so far as I know -- and in regard to this I bear the responsibility alone, and the representatives of the opposition parties are not bound as to it -- the opposition parties are also being exposed to these acts of aggression, especially the issue of the prohibition of meetings, the banning of shops, and pressures on the fighting men of the movements on the part of the regional authorities. We have in some cases found citizens who do not belong to our movement who have been subjected to pressure to leave their premises, but they have refused. Among them is an honored local figure who remained in the face of these pressures. In some cases the judicial authority rejects the contracts that are submitted for presentation as shuffling. The same process is imposed on every citizen who wants to leave a way for an opposition party, in the case of the Communist Party,

for instance. As regards the municipal elections, we are really bewildered. When the acts of aggression started, we tried to understand the reasons and the motivation for these acts: were they in their interests? To the contrary. If they had been in their interests, they would have spoken. I by my nature do not want to get into matters which do not concern me. Some people said there were perhaps things within the regime. As far as I am concerned, the people of Mecca best know its branches, and the regime as a whole is responsible for what is happening. The fact remains that there are people who throw banana peels at one another. This is an issue which does not concern me; this is their business, and is one interpretation.

The obvious thing is that there is rigidity in actual conditions and in official speeches. The citizens experience this rigidity every day. For instance, there is the Rafel case which I forgot to address myself to, which God did not reveal through any authority, and the acts of aggression which occurred during these raids in the form of the failure to respect the most minor human rights and the blatant aggression against individual rights. I wonder why this happiness over the sufferings of others? These are acts of behavior which indicate a lack of comprehension and resentment of the citizen. What is the purpose in this? Does it require all this to preserve the regime? Is it bringing down terror on the citizen? These acts engender resentment and violent reactions. These are obvious pictures in our presence which reveal this rigidity. Does the preservation of security require bringing terror down on the citizens? We go back to the issue of the elections. Of course, if this state of excesses and acts of aggression continues, what municipal or legislative elections are they? If the objective is "to heat up flags" on the part of the ruling party, in order to win more votes or win more approval for its programs in this manner, I do not imagine that that is the most effective way, and the one which will reach its objective. If the intention is directed toward putting the ball back, that is, to bring back the scenario which was held at the start of November 1981, we can say clearly that "a man cannot be hurt by a stone twice." I am speaking in the name of our movement and do not imagine that there are people in the opposition movements who will embark on this adventure if this situation continues.

What I would like to assert is that as far as the Movement of Social Democrats goes the issue is under study, which is no secret, and a committee on ideas has been formed at the level of the political bureau and the national council to learn about the issue from all sides. We have been provided full information and the issue has been studied from all its legal, political and organizational aspects, so that it will be feasible for the political bureau and the national council, if the situation requires, to summon an exceptional conference to produce a final decision.

Mohamed Lahmar, AL-MAWQIF magazine:

You have in general laid the responsibility for these events on the authorities and the ruling party. It might be that these practices issued forth from some blocs or forces among the authorities, apart from the general current.

The second part is the contacts you have made with the opposition parties; is there an intention of getting in contact with the independents?

Ahmed Mestiri: As far as the first part is concerned, the stand and the decision might issue from specific bodies but we are not supposed to know, because we are faced with an official, responsible party; as we said in the last elections, "the people who committed fraud and those who saw and observed the process and kept silent are in the same basket, and they all have the same degree of responsibility." What I would like to assert is that one of the obstacles which face the course of democracy is not just the presence of specific bodies in the regime, that is, at the level of political leadership, but also, and this is a fact, the presence of some feudal forces in some bodies which have power, status and money. Our feudal forces are not feudal forces based on land; they are feudal forces of tribes and inheritance and the like, in the form of milk cows which have arisen from peripheral sectors whose influence sometimes exceeds the regional powers, which are afraid of their anger and greed.

As far as the independents are concerned, I might remind you of what I said in my interview with our newspaper AL-MUSTAQBAL, which may be summarized by the point that it is natural that there should be Tunisians who are independent of the various organizations, and these people have the right to express their positions vis-a-vis the situation in the country and the problems that exist. They are nationalists and competent people, and they have the right to do this.

They also have the right to have a dialogue with the people they wish and with the authorities, and the authorities have the right to conduct a dialogue with them.

However, this is as far as the truthful, honest independents go. As for those who have other designs, they want to exploit goals and personal interests which do not concern us; one person wants a ministry and another wants I do not know what.

What we would like to assert is that this dialogue with independents will not take the place of dialogue with the opposition, and that it will not be an escape from dialogue with existing parties and organizations, which represent intellectual and political currents that exist on the national stage and have bodies and organizations spread out over various areas of the country.

AL-ANWAR newspaper:

With respect to the return of the young people in school, you said that you are against the politicization of schools. However, you said that in the event the inclusion of Destourian party cells in the School Youth continues, that will compel you to hold meetings with students outside the institutes. First of all, don't you consider that this is reckless treatment of the students' involvement in practices which will lead to chaos that might cause some students to be expelled? Second, how can we reconcile the Movement of Democrats' rejection of violence with their acceptance of this student situation which will certainly lead to violence and chaos?

Ahmed Mestiri: I do not imagine that my statement can be interpreted in the way you have presented. For 2 years we have been hearing talk from the prime minister and the minister of education determining to eliminate the School Youth. I am in agreement with this decision and I am against the entry of politics into schools, especially when it comes in through the window and not the door and enters through schoolbooks and curricula, which is something one could describe at length and to which we will not address ourselves now.

By the way, I would like to say that the presence of the director of the Destourian Socialist Party at an administrative meeting with the directors of secondary institutes, under the supervision of the prime minister, is strange and unacceptable, because the directors of secondary institutes are not general secretaries of coordinating committees. When I give them my children, in order to devote themselves to their studies and education, they must not jam them into organizations which are dominated by the Destourian Party, such as School Youth. That is not their task. Then you accuse me of being about to hold meetings inside the schools. That is not true because I will hold them outside the schools. But when? In reality, that will be after the directors of the institutes and the system of education and the students themselves become persuaded that it should happen. Therefore, in this case, we will find that we have come up with a solution, as an opposition party, and consider that the system of pluralism delegates to us, as an opposition, the same rights on an equal footing with the ruling party. After consultation with the other opposition parties, we will hold meetings with the pupils and will urge them to form an organization independent of the School Youth Organization. I ask you not to try to interpret my statement in a manner which is out of context.

AL-SHA'B newspaper:

The Tunisian General Federation of Labor asked for a legal permit for opposition parties while suspending a review of tendencies and ideas until that is realized and political and social pluralism is declared. While political pluralism is an achievement benefiting all groups of the people, social pluralism is an action that is directed against the workers. What is your position?

Ahmed Mestiri: I have answered this question on previous occasions. I can reiterate that we are in favor of political pluralism but not in favor of union pluralism in the current situation, because, while political pluralism has come about as a response to deep aspirations among the masses, union pluralism has appeared under specific circumstances and concomitant conditions. We consider that the Tunisian General Federation of Labor is one of the citadels which is fighting for public freedoms, because it is obvious that there can be no union freedom in the absence of public freedoms. We cannot imagine the presence of an independent union organization in the context of a single party system. Consequently, democracy and the pluralistic system are the best guarantee of union action and the independence of the union organization of all parties. However, I will remind you of what I said before, which was published in the newspaper AL-MESTAYBAL, where I stated: "Regarding the social situation, we believe in the need for real, serious,

constructive dialogue between the authorities and the social parties on a basis where these social parties properly represent social groups. However, when one of the two parties tries to detract from the credibility of the party across from it, these practices contradict the rules of the game. The dialogue must take place on sound grounds, and it is our firm belief that the working class, at the present time, needs an independent democratic national organization which will properly represent it, speak in its name, defend its interests and represent wage earners in their various categories. On the other hand, this organization cannot be transformed into a political party, because if we apply the rule of overlap in full, which is the rule which prevents officials belonging to political movements from bearing union responsibilities, this will cause the Tunisian General Federation of Labor to be transformed into a political organization, to be restricted to specific groups in terms of wage earners, or to be a monopoly on the part of personnel belonging to secret political movements, and I do not believe that this is the goal which the federation aims at."

We are on the side of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor regarding everything related to social struggles aimed at improving the state of wage earners, and we are on its side when it defends union freedoms. However, we believe that the Tunisian General Federation of Labor is an organization that includes wage earners of various categories and various political affiliations and is aimed at defending their occupational interests. We also believe that the Federation of Labor is one of the forces of the people in the country which must be retained because alongside its economic and social role, it has another role related to human rights and public freedoms including union freedoms.

Question: An Arabic language newspaper issued abroad in the name of emigrants:

If you call on guardians to prevent their children from entering the School Youth, how will you get in contact with them?

Ahmed Mestiri: We ask you, as the press, to bring our voice to the citizens. We do not want your sons to join the School Youth. We want them to obtain an education, basically, because we endorse the non-politicization of schools, but will enter them if we are compelled to do so.

The newspaper LE TEMPS:

Why didn't a representative of the Islamic Tendency attend this conference?

What is your position on the coming municipal elections?

Aren't you afraid that the appeal to form an independent school youth would cause conflict in the schools and lead to violence?

Ahmed Mestiri: First, with respect to the absence of a representative from the Islamic Tendency, I can say that we have invited all opposition movements, thank the people who responded to the invitation and hope for an excuse from the people who were absent, but I would like to assert to you

that we are in contact with all opposition parties, and the dialogue between us is continuing. When the leadership of the Islamic tendency was freed, we paid them a visit and they visited us as well. We have repeatedly asked, and ask, that they will be enabled to have their legitimate right to a legal existence. As regards the municipality elections, we are still holding consultations with the opposition parties regarding the decision to take part in the municipal elections, and it is possible, I say possible, that a united position will be taken regarding these elections, according to circumstances. Regarding the politicization of the schools, we are against violence to the point where some people have accused us of being the regime's opposition. We believe that the consequences of violence are deplorable and cannot produce anything positive. However, we do not view violence in a one-sided way. For example, why should we find that students brought to trial for the events of school violence are among the most illustrious students, not the weakest of them? The fact is that no understanding has been given to the students' demands and their preoccupations related to their studies have not been heard. Indeed, the contrary is the case, since some departments intentionally brought in general security forces, which increased the escalation of the situation. Therefore we demand discussion of the causes of the violence and the harsh social circumstances the students are going through. Consequently, the issue of violence is not a simple one. For 2 or 3 years the Ministry of the Interior has been trying to form a committee including parties from the opposition, independents and people bringing up children in order to study the phenomenon of violence.

Consequently, if political ideologies enter into the schools, political dialogue and political competition will turn into an exchange of violence.

I would like, in concluding this conference, to direct thanks to all the people in attendance at it, from the representative of the League of Human Rights to the Communist Party and the Socialist Grouping Party.

I thank you all and hope that we will meet in happy circumstances which will be better ones.

The Sidelines

Attending the press conference were representatives of the movement in the areas that suffered damage:

Our brother Hamida Triki, secretary general of the Gousse federation.

Our brother Ahmed Zeghdane, secretary general of the Medenine federation.

Our brother Taieb El Mohsni, secretary general of the Jendouba federation. Also our brothers Habib Zghedi, member of the Sfax federation, Abielkhalil Ben Hassine, temporary secretary general of the Siliana federation, Abielkhalil Aouadi, secretary general of the Kef federation, and also a number of brothers who suffered damage in the branches as a result of acts of violence and arson.

During the press conference, comments were recorded by correspondents of 15 papers, as follows:

The newspaper AL-MADINAH from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Radio London (the BBC), from Tunisia, the newspapers AL-RA'Y, AL-TARIQ AL-JADID, AL-ANWAR, AL-MAWQIF, AL-SABAH, AL-SHA'B, and LE MATIN, and, from Paris, the newspaper AL-QARAR.

The number of journalists attending this conference totalled 23, representing international news agencies, correspondents with foreign papers and representatives of various orientations in the Tunisian press.

Before the conclusion of this conference, the news that our two fellow publications REALITES and JEUNE AFRIQUE had been shut down for a period of 6 months struck the meeting hall like lightning, and some people commented that that was blatant support for the rigid approach which our brother the secretary general of the Movement of Democratic Socialists had been talking about.

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ECONOMIC, POLITICAL SITUATION IN GAZA DISCUSSED

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Nov 84 p 8

[Article by Robert Little: "Israeli Military Measures Paralyze Life in Gaza"]

[Text] "Welcome to Gaza." This was the sign on the archway across the road leading to the city of Gaza. Beside the road stood two Israeli soldiers, each of them with an American-made automatic rifle slung across his shoulder. They looked like two large-size dummies. They were waiting for someone to make room for them in his car, so that they could return to their barracks a few kilometers from the city.

The disparity between the welcome sign and the sight of the two soldiers was like some kind of an ugly joke, because the city's welcome was certainly not directed at them. It was also not directed at the passengers of the white Porsche, which had followed me for 2 hours after I rented a car during my stay at the hotel in Tel Aviv.

It was strange that the passengers in the white car, in their dark-colored clothes, made no attempt to hide themselves. When I stopped for a cup of coffee or a light meal, they stopped as well and sat in the same coffeeshop, only a short distance from me.

Secret Expulsion

Throughout the hot day, which I spent back and forth from Tel Aviv, that car trailed me continually. However, I felt some slight amusement at their interest in me, because whatever their purpose in following me, they were certainly well aware that I was not a friend of theirs.

However, the Israelis do not have many friends in Gaza; they have no friends at all. Perhaps the hail of stones that the school students throw at them is usually the simplest form of welcome that they can expect, but many times the projectiles are much deadlier.

On a piece of land 40 km long and 3.5 km wide, more than one-half million Palestinians are packed, two-thirds of them still crammed into UN refugee camps. Frequently they lack piped water, while they seethe in hatred for the Israeli occupiers, like lava boiling in a volcano.

As regards the city of Gaza, which at one time was a city resounding with activity and movement, today it has become a city mired in the mud. It has lost its bloom of youth. The buildings, whose paint is peeling off, sprawl towards the sea, where the golden coast lies deserted, save for a fisherman here and there, patching his sails. The Mediterranean glistens in the autumn sun, as if it were a huge road of silver, but many of the roads leading to it have been blocked off with coils of barbed wire.

I found the restaurants located along the seacoast, which are still open to receive guests, to be nearly deserted, with the exception of groups of senior citizens, engrossed in games of backgammon.

Along the empty road to the Gaza Strip, the road is blocked with check points, established by the Israeli army, behind which are lined up cars, trucks and buses for a distance of 200 meters or more, waiting to go through. As for vehicles like my car that carry yellow license tags, there was no wait at all. Therefore, I was permitted to go through at once (and right behind me was the white car that was accompanying me, without a challenge.)

As for cars registered in Gaza, which carry silver license plates, or blue ones for the West Bank, they run into other circumstances. Every fourth or fifth vehicle in line is taken away from the road to a security area, where a thorough search is done, looking for arms or illegal materials, such as prohibited books or newspapers, or films, or other commodities for which the driver is unable to find any legal justification for bringing it in.

Strict security control measures are applied all along the coast, which is nearly deserted. Every half hour or so, the skies over the beach are cluttered by the sound of military helicopter engines, which deafen the ears, as they carry out continuous surveillance and guard patrols. At night, these aircraft search with powerful searchlights, illuminating the beach with a strong glare.

Along the sand dunes and on the main roads in the towns and villages, and surrounding areas, military jeeps carry out patrol activities, with automatic weapons constantly at the ready. They pass by with monotonous and reverend regularity. They are proud of their military capability, in the face of an annoyed, disinterested populace.

Military Restrictions

Rafael Abu-Isa, the mayor of Gaza, whom the Israeli authorities removed from office, told me as we were sitting together in his office in the middle of the city: "Our lives have become completely paralyzed, due to all these military restrictions, to such an extent that we cannot now breathe freely. The people feel completely impotent. The city suffers from a state of severe depression. There is no way here to organize armed resistance, since the people are crushed under the force

of the oppression that the Israeli authorities exercise. There is no freedom of expression or writing or even thought. If I deviate from the proper path, you have the right to punish me."

It is well known that Rashad al-Shawwa is one of the nine Arab mayors in the occupied territories who were ousted from their posts by order of the Israeli military authorities in March 1982, because they refused to cooperate with the Israeli Civilian Office. Nevertheless, al-Shawwa is considered, as opposed to certain of the other mayors, to be a more moderate person in the political realm of the PLO.

Nevertheless, it is as easy to find out the location of his private office as it is the headquarters of his more extreme colleagues on the West Bank, from the long lines crowded with petitioners seeking assistance, who go in and out of his office seeking aid and counsel.

An Economic Crisis

Rashad al-Shawwa, with his imposing stature and distinguished features, might be considered a businessman or banker in the City of London.

He says angrily: "They have tied our economic and social life to Israel to such a degree that we cannot obtain anything without their approval. We cannot obtain a license to build a hospital or a mosque, not to mention a factory. On the contrary, no one can sell his land, unless that is approved by the responsible officer. Nevertheless, they can issue orders confiscating our land, so that they can build settlements on it.

"No one is allowed to undertake any building that is in conflict with any Israeli establishments or projects. For 10 years, we have been trying to obtain the authorities' approval to build a factory to produce orange, lemon and other citrus juice. However, you will find here about 500 small establishments engaged in weaving, producing fabric every day. It is cut and prepared for sewing, so that cheap labor is exploited. Later, the clothing and needlework is exported to all parts of the world, marked made in Israel."

During my stay in Gaza, the Palestinian weekly newspaper AL-FAJR stated that the Israeli Supreme Court had rejected a petition submitted by 35 residents of the Bayt Lahiyah district in Gaza, protesting the Israeli authorities' plans to evict them from their homes, out of a desire to facilitate expansion operations in the construction of a new settlements project.

High Taxes

However, the restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on scores of citrus farms in the Strip were, as Rashad al-Shawwa says, the biggest of all the problems. The Arab farmers are not permitted to export their oranges to Europe, because that would be in competition with Israeli

farmers. Instead, they are required to ship their produce overland through Jordan to other Arab states. However, al-Shawwa says that fuel for irrigation pumps, fertilizer and insecticides are all subject to high taxes. Moreover, tolls over the bridge must be paid at the Jordanian border and, consequently, the fruit is sold for less than it costs. Every season, much of it is left to rot on the trees.

However, the Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt has not brought any lessening in the hard line against Palestinians in Gaza. Previously this year, Rashad al-Shawwa led a delegation of citrus producers to Cairo, where they negotiated with the Egyptian president, Husni Mubarak, on a marketing agreement.

Mr al-Shawwa said: "We thought that relations with Egypt were normal, but the Israeli authorities have so far forbidden the implementation of the agreement, claiming that it was not concluded through proper channels."

Every day at 6 o'clock in the evening, all the beaches are completely closed down along the strip of Gaza coastline. The Israeli troops intensify their patrolling, searching for small boats that smuggle weapons, or PLO representatives carrying messages, or other things. However, despite the vigilance of the Israelis, it is clear that many secret activities still continue.

Posters of Mr Arafat, underneath the Palestinian flag, with its tricolors of red, white and green, appear night after night on walls and shut-up buildings, as if they were appearing from the unknown.

7005

CSO: 4404/83

JULY 1984 BANK OF LEBANON'S ASSETS, DEBTS REPORTED

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 15 Aug 84 p 7

/Article: "Bank of Lebanon at End of July: Drop of 107 Million in Currency in Circulation and Increase of 50 Million in Treasury Debt"

/Text/ The Bank of Lebanon issued yesterday a report on its financial situation at the end of last July as compared to the middle of that month. The report, issued late, shows the following changes:

1. The figures concerning the money in circulation dropped by 107 million pounds compared to a drop of 80 million pounds in the first half of July. The figures concerning "gold and foreign currencies" in the provision dropped by 86 million pounds.

The volume of the money in circulation thus dropped in July by a full 187 million pounds, i.e. by 2.62 percent of the total volume of currency /in circulation/. This decline, though limited, reflects the relative relaxation emerging with the start of implementation of the security plan.

2. The figures concerning loans to the public sector in the assets column rose by 55 million pounds representing the debt owed by the treasury to the Bank of Lebanon.

The increase reflects stability in the wake of the drop registered in the first half of July and meaning that the weekly yield of the treasury notes has not compelled the treasury to borrow from the Bank of Lebanon.

3. The figures concerning loans to the private sector in the assets column increased by 257 million pounds after having dropped by 166 million pounds in the first half of July.

It seems that the banks have resumed resorting to the Bank of Lebanon to obtain special loans, keeping in mind that some of these loans may be connected with the pending banking issue (First Phoenician Bank).

4. The figures concerning "other assets and debit accounts" dropped by 660 million pounds compared to an increase of 217 million pounds in the first half of July.

This drop came as a result of the Bank of Lebanon's intervention in the currency market, selling dollars at the time when the bank tried to stabilize the pound's exchange rate and to prevent sharp fluctuation.

5. The figures concerning "on-demand deposits" in the debits column increased by 159 million pounds representing mostly the banks' voluntary and obligatory reserve deposited with the Bank of Lebanon.

This increase was registered at the time despite the Bank of Lebanon's intervention, selling dollars and absorbint the liquidity in Lebanese pounds.

6. The figures pertaining to "other deposits" in the debits column dropped by 422 million pounds.

Following is a "brief statement of position" by the Bank of Lebanon:

<u>Assets</u>	<u>On 31 July 1984</u> <u>In Lebanese Pounds</u>	<u>On 15 July 1984</u> <u>In Lebanese Pounds</u>
1. Gold and Foreign Currencies (Article 69 of Currency and Loan Law)	5,628,866,795.91	5,714,414,725.27
2. Loans to Public Sector	6,559,825,790.00	6,504,471,121.39
3. Loans to Private Sector	1,124,293,539.51	367,138,070.07
4. Loans in Accordance with Law No 28 of 1967	295,987.43	290,841.13
5. Other Assets and Debit Accounts	5,828,799,926.00	6,488,280,513.15
Total	19,142,082,088.85	19,574,595,271.01
<u>Obligations</u>		
1. Ondemand Commitments		
A. Money in Circulation	7,036,080,966.45	7,143,014,995.60
B. Ondemand Deposits	5,867,490,451.29	5,728,246,546.89
(Total)	12,903,571,417.74	12,871,261,542.49
2. Other Deposits	3,934,858,322.12	4,356,231,776.37
3. Capital	15,000,000.00	15,000,000.00
4. General Reserve	843,480,297.35	843,480,297.35
5. Other Debit Accounts	1,445,172,051.64	1,488,621,654.80
Total	19,142,082,088.85	19,574,595,271.01

444.
CSO: 4404703

IMPROVED BEIRUT PORT ACTIVITY REPORTED FOR 1983

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 13 Aug 34 p 7

/Article by Michel Marqus: "Legitimate Government Reentered Beirut Port in 1983; Port Dealt With 168 International Ports and Regained 75 Percent of Its Activity"/

/Text/ The general statistics on economic activity in Lebanon issued late this year because of the freeze which has prevailed for almost 4 months, contain some hope of the possibility of reviving activity and of bringing it up to a satisfactory level if the legitimate government can plant its feet, impose its authority and subject all to its control.

These statistics include the report issued a week ago by the Beirut Port Management and Utilization Company on maritime activity last year. The report says that a total of 2,949 vessels dealt with the port compared to 1,911 vessels in 1982, i.e. an increase of 54.3 percent. The 2,949 figure represents 81.6 percent of the number of vessels visiting the port in 1974, i.e. 10 years ago.

It is to be noted that the administration's encouraging start, which has restored Greater Beirut and its suburbs to the legitimate government's control and which shut down the illegal ports last year, has contributed to the activity of this vital facility. The port's movement of goods, excluding transit movement, amounted to 76 percent of the port's activity in 1974, with vessels unloading 2,546,262 tons and 219,638 loads of 100 pounds and loading 1,055,890 tons. The unloaded goods activity recorded an increase of 42.3 percent over 1982, exported goods an increase of 9.2 percent and transit goods an increase of 5.1 percent.

The vessels entering Beirut Port included 2,712 plus 222 foreign, 86 warships and 117 tankers. As for nationality, the vessels were distributed as follows:

Steamships: 739 Lebanese, 362 Cypriot, 228 West German, 111 Russian, 120 Panamanian, 129 Greek, 129 Italian, 116 East German, 81 Jordanian, 78 American, 71 French, 69 Yugoslav, 64 Romanian, 57 British, 46 Malaysian, 44 Albanian, 33 Spanish, 21 Czech, 18 Danish, 17 Syrian, 15 Bulgarian, 15 Sudan, 15 Polish, 14 American, 14 Hungarian, 13 Swedish, 7 Japanese, 7 Philippines, 2 Norwegian, 1 Sri Lankan and 1 from each of Bermuda, Egypt, Finland and Portugal.

Sailboats: 81 Egyptian, 7 Syrian and 2 Turkish.

Oil Tankers: 49 Panamanian, 23 Italian, 14 Greek, 10 Maltese, 3 Cypriot, 1 German, 4 British, 3 Liberian, 2 Moroccan, 2 Norwegian and 1 Lebanese.

Movement of Goods

The movement of goods entering the country via Beirut Port according to type was as follows: 29 percent in construction materials, 20 percent fuels, 15 percent grains and flour, 6 percent in machinery and vehicles, 5 percent in chemicals and dyes, 5 percent in fruits and vegetables, 4 percent in paper and cardboard products, 4 percent in foodstuffs, 2 percent in livestock fodder and 10 percent in miscellaneous goods.

The sources of these goods were: Italy, 15 percent; the United States, 11 percent; Romania, 11 percent; France, 8 percent; Belgium, 6 percent; Germany, 4 percent; Greece, 4 percent; Cyprus, 3 percent; Holland, 3 percent; the Soviet Union, 3 percent; Yugoslavia, 3 percent; Brazil, 2 percent; Egypt, 2 percent; Britain, 2 percent; Turkey, 2 percent and other countries 11 percent.

The goods exported were, according to type, as follows: 26 percent in scrap iron; 9 percent fruits and citrus; 7 percent grains; 6 percent fresh and frozen vegetables; 5 percent foodstuffs, 4 percent chemicals; 4 percent textiles, 3 percent grains and spices; 2 percent construction materials, 2 percent leathers and hides and 32 percent in miscellaneous goods.

The countries of destination to which the goods were shipped are: Egypt, 19 percent; Turkey, 17 percent; Italy, 15 percent; Cyprus, 11 percent; France, 6 percent; Lebanon /sic/, 4 percent; Yugoslavia, 4 percent; the United States, 3 percent; Holland, 3 percent; Algeria, 2 percent; Saudi Arabia, 2 percent; Bulgaria, 2 percent; Britain, 2 percent; Greece, 2 percent; Libya, 2 percent; East Germany, 2 percent and other countries 4 percent.

The containerized shipment of goods increased, with 20.9 percent of unloaded goods coming in containers, excluding fuels. The figure rises to 25 percent if grains are excluded.

Meanwhile, the percentage of goods shipped by container amounted to 28.4 percent.

A total of 1,017 freighters carried 10,034 containers loaded with 129,371 tons. The containers were distributed as follows:

A total of 3,125 containers unloaded and delivered directly.

A total of 4,898 containers unloaded in the warehouses.

A total of 32,169 containers transported full into the country.

A total of 333 containers on transit.

A total of 36,676 containers were shipped abroad empty and of 2,167 containers shipped abroad carrying 29,976 tons of goods.

Fleets

Some maritime fleets were involved with a higher percentage than others. But this percentage is different from the percentage of goods they carried because shipping goods depends on the load capacity of each ship on the one hand and the effort of the maritime agency /representing it/ on the other. The percentage distribution for steamships was as follows:

The Lebanese fleet got 27 percent of the number of vessels and 13.3 percent of the volume of goods. The Greek fleet got 4.7 percent of the number of vessels involved and 11.4 percent of the goods; the West German fleet got 8.3 percent of the number and 7.7 percent of the volume; the East German fleet got 4.7 percent of the number and 7.7 percent of the volume; the Cypriot fleet got 13.2 percent of the number and 7.4 percent of the volume; the Panamanian fleet got 5.3 percent of the number and 6.5 percent of the volume; the Italian fleet got 4.7 percent of the number and 5.7 percent of the volume; the Russian fleet got 5.5 percent of the number of vessels involved and 4.5 percent of the volume of goods shipped.

Thus, 72.9 percent of the steamships transported 64.2 percent of the goods while 27.1 percent of those ships transported 35.8 percent of the goods.

Transit Activity and Free Zone

The transit activity amounted to 93,056 tons representing 9.5 percent of the activity in 1974. This is a low percentage if compared with the time when Beirut Port was a main gate for a number of Arab countries, a gate which they have lost as a result of the war that has been going on for 10 years. Most of the transit goods have turned toward Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

The movement of goods in the free zone amounted to 4,800 tons, of which 1,400 tons were for local consumption and 3,400 tons for transit shipment. The transit movement through the customs system amounted to 89,700 tons.

Passenger Movement

The year 1983 was distinguished by passenger movement through Beirut Port after closure of the airport at the end of August because of the mountain war. This movement registered 60,128 passengers arriving and departing. This is the highest figure since 1975. Most of those passengers arrived or departed in September, with the number of arrivals amounting to 11,695 and the number of departures amounting to 30,183 passengers. Then in December, when the airport was closed again, 4,012 passengers arrived and 4,898 passengers departed through the port.

The number of transit passengers amounted to 154, of passengers travelling free of charge to 401 and of fare-paying passengers to 60,128.

Beirut and Other Ports

In 1981, Beirut Port dealt with 168 international ports, including 48 Mediterranean and Black Sea ports, 31 northern and Baltic ports, 20 Red Sea, Arab Gulf and Indian ports, 18 non-Mediterranean African ports, 18 Far East and Burmese ports, 11 Atlantic ports, 7 South American ports, 6 ports on the Great Lakes (United States) and 2 Pacific ports.

Thus, Beirut Port experienced in 1983 a kind of activity which it had lacked since 1975. But this year's events again caused it to lose the momentum with which it moved last year. This momentum has been absorbed by the war and by the activity of the illegal ports.

Movement of Goods According to Type (in Tons)

Type of Goods	Unloaded	Loaded	Total
Iron, Steel, Metals	524,323	27,634	551,957
Liquid Fuels	434,414	-	434,414
Grains	175,269	6,907	182,176
Wheat	169,065	-	169,065
Medical and Chemical Products	114,012	3,932	117,944
Paper and Cardboard	110,865	4,977	115,842
Construction Materials	113,287	1,277	114,564
Vehicles and Spare Parts	80,717	766	81,483
Potatoes	72,237	-	72,237
Liquid Gas	62,537	-	62,537
Construction Timber	58,483	11	58,494
Electrical Appliances & Spare Parts	41,230	1,896	43,126
Livestock Feeder	36,667	676	37,343
Milk & Derivatives	35,372	856	36,228
Knitwear & Spare Parts	29,086	1,702	30,788
Processed Foodstuffs	27,887	2,723	30,610
Fresh & Dried Fruits	20,852	7,063	27,915
Fresh and Dried Vegetables	20,192	6,313	26,505
Flour	22,396	-	22,396
Food & Feed Products	19,699	315	20,014
Cement & Dry Clay	19,338	674	20,012
Glass and Glassware	18,236	566	18,802
Canned Food	17,106	1,044	18,150
Textiles and Yarn	13,607	3,241	16,848
Chemical Fertilizer	16,089	-	16,089
Oil Seeds	12,645	1,806	14,451
Coffee, Tea & Spices	12,046	1,258	13,304
Sugar	12,532	22	12,554
Vegetable Fat & Oil	10,723	660	11,383
Rice	9,923	512	10,435
Gases & Fire Tubes	9,723	56	9,779
Alcoholic & Other Beverages	7,390	1,446	8,836
Wool	8,752	-	8,752
Mineral Oils & Lubricants	8,004	-	8,004

(Continued on next page)

(Continued)

Movement of Goods According to Type (in Tons)

<u>Type of Goods</u>	<u>Unloaded</u>	<u>Loaded</u>	<u>Total</u>
Asphalt	6,319	-	6,319
Various Grains	4,126	229	4,355
Glucose and (Molasses)	3,699	-	3,699
Leather & Hides	976	2,103	3,079
Secondhand Clothing	1,586	414	2,000
Lemons & Oranges	80	1,904	1,984
Onions	1,302	4	1,306
Coal	1,100	-	1,100
Salt	1,049	-	1,049
Wool and Hair	173	789	962
Cotton & Cotton Leftovers	751	-	751
Miscellaneous	180,397	21,864	202,261
Grand Total	2,546,262	105,640	2,651,902

8494

CSO: 4404/65

BRIEFS

BEIRUT PORT TRAFFIC--The number of vessels entering Beirut Port from 1 January to the end of June 1984 amounted to 284 vessels unloading 856,269 tons and 17,346 heads of livestock and loading 18,475 tons. It is to be noted that the port was closed from 6 February to 9 July and that most of the traffic occurred in January, with 187 vessels entering the port whereas 48 vessels entered in February, 13 in March, 12 in April, 11 in May and 13 in June. The largest number of the vessels entering during closure of the port were fuel tankers or wheat and flour freighters. The number of fuel tankers was 14 in January, 8 in February, 9 in March, 7 in April, 7 in May and 8 in June. They carried 440,216 tons representing 51.4 percent of the total volume of goods unloaded. Wheat freighters unloaded 125,000 tons. The free zone and transit activity was confined to January and a part of February, with the free zone's activity amounting to 34 tons and the transit activity to 708 tons. Passenger traffic was confined to 53 passengers arriving and 6 passengers departing. Container activity, most of it in January, was as follows: The number of containers unloaded amounted to 3,609 containers of which 383 delivered their contents directly and 217 unloaded in the warehouses. A total of 3,533 full containers were delivered into the country, including 2,239 containers in January, and 31 containers delivered by transit. A total of 3,113 containers were shipped unloaded and 372 were shipped loaded. /Text/ /Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 21 Aug 84 p 7/ 8494

CSO: 4404/65

U.S., PAKISTAN PROVIDING MONEY, ARMS, SUPPORT TO INSURGENTS

Moscow ZA RUBEZHOM in Russian No 41, 5-11 Oct 84 p 9

[Article attributed to KABUL NEW TIMES: "Hundreds of Millions of Dollars to Undermine the Afghan Revolution"]

[Text] With the connivance of Pakistan, the United States is broadening the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. The Islamabad regime, in particular, has offered its territory for more than 100 special camps where counterrevolutionary terrorists whose actions are directed by the special services of the United States, other NATO countries, and Pakistan, go through training. They are the ones who finance the bandits and provide them with arms. This undeclared war is a vivid example of the policy of state terrorism followed by the United States.

More and more new facts about the flagrant intervention of the United States and its partners in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan are becoming public knowledge. The anti-Afghan line has been the state policy of the Reagan administration for a long time. A special center has been set up in Nebraska [?] to plan subversive operations against Afghanistan, as well as a "center for the study of Afghanistan, which received a million dollars from the CIA in 1983 alone. The head of this "center" recently visited Pakistan where he met with representatives of counter-revolutionary anti-Afghan groups and discussed questions concerning joining them together for combined operations.

Several international organizations that are under U. S. control are also engaged with the questions of espionage and subversive actions against Afghanistan.

In its undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan the United States, as we know, makes broad use of the territory of Pakistan, which they have turned into a base of operations for training antifascist groups. Many facts and documents which have been published in the press again and again show irrefutably who is supplying the counterrevolutionary groups with weapons and money and giving them instructions.

The intensification of the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is taking place concurrently with an expansion of the activity of high-ranking American political and state figures in Pakistan, where there are more than 100 military camps of the Afghan counterrevolutionaries. (U. S. Deputy Secretary of State L. Eagleberger has stated that the Reagan administration has already given more than 300 million dollars in the form of "aid to refugee camps" in Pakistan. In reality this aid is going to maintain, train, and arm the bandit groups -- editor).

The conversion of Pakistan into a strongpoint of imperialism in South Asia and the furious pace of arms build-up in this country seriously undermine efforts to establish peace and security in this region. The ugly conspiracy of Washington and Islamabad, which serves American interests and makes it easier for the United States to carry out its policy there, is a source of alarm and concern in Pakistan's neighboring countries.

The Afghan army is firmly repelling the bands of imperialist mercenaries. But the agents of American, English, French, and Pakistani special services are not stopping their attempts to penetrate the territory of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to carry out espionage assignments. For example, on 17 September near the populated point of Spinbuldak on the Afghan-Pakistani border armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan smashed a band from one of the counterrevolutionary organizations. Among the persons taken prisoner was a French citizen, Jacques Abouchar. He had come to Afghanistan posing as a journalist. He was found to have espionage equipment for gathering secret information in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. The documents he was carrying indicate the Abouchar was directing the criminal activity of the bandits.

11,176
CSO: 1807/50

CIVILIANS THREATENED WITH STARVATION

Paris LIBERATION in French 6 Nov 84 p 26

[Article by Patrick Sabatier]

[Text] Winter promises to be harsh for the Afghan Mujahidin. Last Saturday, during a press conference held in a Peshawar villa (northwest Pakistan) serving as headquarters for an humanitarian organization, (Swedish Committee for Afghanistan) three military leaders of the resistance issued a joint appeal for international assistance, citing "the danger of starvation" which threatens civilians, in several provinces where the fighting has been particularly intense in recent months. Allahudin, military leader of the Herat region, Yahya Mas'ud, representing the legendary commander Mas'ud, who directs the resistance fighters of the Panjshir, and Abdul Haq, head of the Kabul region, described the situation as "critical" in several regions.

They made public a letter from Mas'ud written 2 weeks ago in which the Panjshir commander wrote, "Snow has begun to fall on all the towns and passes of the region. All of the supply routes will no doubt soon be closed...Most of our centers have reserves for only 1 week at the most, and I have only 50,000 Afghani (around 500 [French] francs) left. The enemy is preparing to launch a new offensive. I no longer know what to do...if the basic needs of the population are not covered they may well give up the struggle." Since then, the Soviet army has begun its campaign in the region. (See LIBERATION of 3 November).

For his part, Allaudin, who had arrived barely a few days earlier at Peshawar to seek assistance, recognizes that "the resistance is meeting with great difficulties: we lack food, clothing, medicines, and all basic supplies. According to this former captain in the Afghan army who went over to the resistance in 1980, more than one-third of the population of Herat province had to flee the incessant bombing by Soviet aviation. The latter practically destroyed all the villages within a radius of 120 kilometers around the city of Herat. According to the account of Professor Danzinovic, a British academic who was able to go to Herat from Iran this summer, the situation in this region is "very disquieting."

Allaudin, a calm man who speaks in a gentle voice, explains, "The Soviets who cannot defeat us militarily, have started to destroy everything in

order to drive away the inhabitants and thus isolate us. This new tactic allowed the Soviets to win a few victories," confirms Yahya Mas'ud, who left the Panjshir 2 months ago to try to find support for his brother's troops.

According to Yahya, "Ninety-five percent of the valley farms were destroyed during the recent offensives, 80 percent of the cattle were lost. All the civilians--more than 100,000 persons--had to flee to the mountains..."

A number of these refugees from the interior are women, children, and old people who no longer have any other means of subsistence than the foodstuffs bought in neighboring localities with the money distributed to them by the resistance. The scorched earth policy put into effect for a year by the Red Army in certain strategic regions includes, according to Doctor Hajrooh, who directs the Afghan information center at Peshawar, "systematic bombing of dams and irrigation systems, destruction of crops at harvest time, spreading of anti-personnel mines and terror raids against the villages...They have understood that the resistance draws the basis of its strength from Afghan society itself...They have therefore started to ruin and destroy it..." Civilians therefore have to choose between two solutions: flee to Pakistan--which they are doing in ever increasing numbers (35,000 refugees arrived two weeks ago from Gunduz) or flee to the cities controlled by the Soviet-supported communist regime. The resistance members recognize that a certain number of them do this.

One or the other of the solutions endangers the resistance, which thus could be in danger of losing its popular support. Obviously, aside from the triumphal communiqués circulated by the offices of the resistance organizations in Peshawar, the Afghan Mujahidin have not yet found a truly effective counter-attack against this reconstructed policy formerly implemented by the Americans in Vietnam. And civilians are putting a heavier and heavier financial burden on the war. According to Allaudin the number of non-combatants killed and wounded around Herat since 1980 probably exceeds 40,000. According to the Afghan information center, the last Soviet offensive against the Panjshir reportedly caused the death of more than 1000 civilians.

9772

CSO: 4619/8

RESISTANCE THREATENS KABUL WHILE RISKING STARVATION ELSEWHERE

Paris LIBERATION in French 6 Nov 84 p 26

[Text] An attack by the resistance in the center of Kabul: it is rare for the official radio of the Babrak Karmal regime to acknowledge the existence of an attack, as it has just done. It is even rarer that it should give so precise an account as the one broadcast Sunday night: 5 dead, 16 wounded, 3 houses destroyed and 23 damaged in the old city of the Afghan capital. The action by the resistance fighters was very spectacular: according to Radio Kabul they fired a missile "of American manufacture" (without mentioning any names) which was aimed at the offices of the Defense and Information Ministries. At least that is what the resistance representatives said at Peshawar in statements obtained by LIBERATION'S special correspondent. This tactic of rocket or missile bombing began about 2 months ago: the Afghan resistance seems to wish to prove in this way "the noose is tightening" around Kabul and Babrak Karmal's supporters are no longer safe there. This is long distance urban guerrilla warfare, which leads one to expect still worse confrontations in this very center of the city.

In any case the Afghan authorities wished to give a clear warning to the troops bent on bringing the war into Kabul: yesterday they announced the execution of nine resistance fighters sentenced to death last month. The military court found them guilty of the attack carried out 31 August in the Kabul airport hall: about 30 persons were killed and several hundred injured during an action that dumbfounded the government. Resistance leaders withdrawn into Pakistan have not yet stated whether the difficulties encountered in the mountainous regions of Afghanistan would lead them to concentrate their efforts on Kabul.

However the security system deployed by the Soviets there is much stronger and the resistance fighters are really not used to urban terrain. Babrak Karmal, who presided over the court of justice which refused to pardon the airport nine who were sentenced to death, seems aware of the stakes.

9772

CSO: 4612/8

FRENCH DOCTORS REPORT BADAKHSHAN 'UNTOUCHED BY WAR'

PARIS LIBERATION in French 20 Nov 84 p 30

[Article by Patrick Sabatier]

[Text] The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union has once again been condemned by an overwhelming majority (119 to 20) in the General Assembly of the United Nations. However, as the fifth anniversary of the "Kabul coup" approaches, the USSR is not showing any tendencies toward compromise. Quite to the contrary, the Red Army is intensifying its operations against the resistance. It has succeeded, according to an Afghan source reported by AFP, in inflicting heavy damage on the Mujahidin in the south of the country, particularly around Qandahar, second largest city in Afghanistan. Fighting is raging in the Panjshir (north of Kabul), where Soviet-Afghan forces have stepped up their offenses to try to destroy the Afghan resistance, according to a message from their chief, Major Mas'ud, published Monday in Peshawar.

The Soviet Army has also increased its pressure on the northern provinces along the Soviet border, as indicated by eyewitness accounts which we are publishing here.

Three war--Marie-Louise Le Floch, Denis Charlot and Claire Janssens returned to Peshawar on 11 October after walking for a month across northeastern Afghanistan, a region of high mountains and hidden valleys peopled by Tajiks (ethnics of Iranian origin), to the foothills of the Pamir. "Doctors Without Borders," they went to bring medical assistance and medicines to the people in the province of Badakhshan, on Afghanistan's border with the Soviet Union and Pakistan. This is a strategic area, because it controls access to the "Wakhan corridor," a strip of Afghan territory which separates the USSR from India and China. Emptied of its people, this corridor has, pure and simply, been annexed by Moscow, and only the Red Army, which has missile bases there (according to the Afghan resistance), lives there today.

The three "Doctors Without Borders" left for Badakhshan on 14 July, escorted by a dozen fighters from Jam'iat-e-Islami (Islamic Fundamentalist Party) and a caravan of 29 mules and horses carrying 1.8 tons of medicines. "It was quickly

perceived that since the Soviets controlled all highways and cities, we would have to use barely visible mountain trails and cross, by night, mountain passes which we thought we would never be able to climb. Soon after our departure we lost six of our animals, which fell from the passes. By the time we arrived at our destination in the Keshem Valley, we had lost nearly 40 percent of the medicines." At no time in their journey did the three MSF [Doctors Without Borders] doctors see even the shadow of a Soviet or Afghan soldier, nor the smallest military presence, except for some reconnaissance planes flying over some of the passes. "However, we did pass along the way many caravans transporting arms. At Kantiwa, for example, which is a point of departure for caravans going to Panjshir, more than 500 horses per day passed, loaded with weapons and munitions."

There is so little news from Badakhshan that at Peshawar the resistance fighters themselves thought that the region had perhaps been "pacified" by the Soviets. In fact, the three MSF doctors discovered a world "where one got the impression that the war did not exist." "We were in a rich valley where there was no hunger and where fighting was very sporadic. The last Soviet helicopter operation took place in the spring, and they had established a small base in the lower part of the valley. From time to time the Mujahidin launch an attack, and the Soviets respond with a bombardment. We witnessed four of these actions between 4 September and 5 October."

As is true more or less throughout Afghanistan, these bombardments, carried out by MiGs after helicopters have identified their targets, seemed completely ineffectual against the resistance: "Between the time the reconnaissance helicopters pass over and the moment the planes dropped their bombs, there was ample time to take shelter in the caves," said Denis. "The only victims are the children, the elderly and animals." The Mujahidin are hardly in a position to retaliate: "They are more like ragtag rebels than soldiers. They have nothing, or nearly nothing--no boots or socks, and they are badly disorganized. They fire on planes flying 2,000 meters with automatic rifles and treat the war like a game of spies. They spend most of their time greasing their weapons--AK47s made in China--five times a day and also praying five times a day. From time to time they go out and take part in an ambush. Some of them fight with other resistance groups. Wherever they go they are immediately given lodging, fed and taken care of by the people. They levy a 'voluntary' tax of 10 percent on harvests. The entire population meets in the mosque with the 'commandant' and the mullah (religious leader) and declares publicly the amount of their harvest and the amount they are giving to the Mujahidin. Woe betide anyone who tries to cheat." The lord of the Keshem Valley is Amir Aryanpoor, the local leader of Jam'iat-e-Islami, a former teacher (like many other leaders) and about 35 years old, who speaks a little English. He is respected, if not loved, by the population. He is one of the Islamic revolution's rigid purists. "Throughout the valley he has forbidden smoking, card playing and singing and dancing for the duration of the 'jihad' (holy war). In order for us to be accepted, we had to state that we were Muslims, because in that valley there is no greater crime than to be an atheist." At least Marie-Louise and Claire managed to get themselves excused from wearing a veil. In other areas, MSF has had to call off its missions because of the hostility of the resistance chiefs to the presence of female doctors, who were accused of "exciting the guerrillas."

"In fact," said Marie-Louise, "one really has the feeling of making a true journey in time and going back a thousand years. The people of Badakhshan do not know how to use a cigarette lighter, nor a watch, nor soap. They are nearly 100 percent illiterate. Hygiene is frightful--it is one of the dirtiest places I have ever seen, and the people almost never bathe. The infant mortality rate is dreadful: higher than one of every two newborns. Most of the diseases one encounters are due to the lack of hygiene." The region was forbidden to foreigners before the war, and the Soviet invasion has not yet brought down a society which is self-sufficient, resting on an immutable order in which injuries are cared for by covering them with pages from the Koran; however, things have begun to change, imperceptibly, in the hidden valleys of northern Afghanistan. "The guerrilla leaders have transistor radios and regularly listen to the BBC, Voice of America and even Radio Kabul. Even in the most remote areas they had heard about the release of Jacques Abouchar."

8735

CSO: 4619/10

SOVIETS ACKNOWLEDGE MUJAHIDIN ROCKETING KABUL

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 27 Nov 84 p 1

[Text] MOSCOW, Nov. 26 (Dispatches)--The Soviet Union, in a rare admission, said that Mujahideen forces in Afghanistan had bombarded the capital with surface-to-surface rockets.

"The counterrevolution has perpetrated a heinous crime against the Afghan people," the official Tass news agency said late Sunday in a report carrying a Kabul dateline.

"In the middle of last night, the bandits fired surface-to-surface missiles of American and Chinese make at Kabul from a long distance," Tass aid.

The Soviet report, repeated from the Afghan Bakhtar news agency, said that four people were killed, 17 wounded and an unspecified number of houses were damaged or destroyed.

Soviet authorities routinely deny western reports of Mujahideen activity affecting the cities of the central Asian nation, claiming that life in urban areas is peaceful and untouched by the fighting in the countryside.

Soviet troops, now estimated to number about 120,000 men, poured into Afghanistan in December 1979 and have been locked in an inconclusive war with the Muslim Mujahideen ever since.

The cities are occupied by Soviet troops while Mujahideen forces hold much of the countryside, but western reports have persistently said that the Soviet control of the cities is precarious at night.

Tass described the missiles as being fired from "a long distance," indicating that insurgent forces are not near the city. However, the rockets believed used by the Mujahideen are unlikely to have a range exceeding about seven miles (11 km).

CSO: 4600/127

MUJAHIDIN ASSAULT SURPRISES SOVIET, GOVERNMENT FORCES

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 28 Nov 84 p 1

[Text] NEW DELHI, Nov. 27 (Dispatches)--In one of their largest attacks in the Afghan capital since the Soviets invaded the country five years ago, Muslim Mujahideen showered crowded areas of the city with rocket and mortar fire, western diplomats said Tuesday.

During a 45-minute attack Saturday night, guerrillas launched "between 20 and 25 projectiles," most landing in a Soviet residential neighborhood, a diplomat said.

One western source said the Mujahideen assault was "one of the worst attacks to date."

"This was a very significant attack given the intensive security measures taken recently in and around Kabul to prevent just such an incident," the source said.

The diplomats, quoting state-run Kabul radio and television, said four people were killed and 17 wounded in the attack.

"According to diplomatic eyewitnesses, projectiles making a loud whistling noise came from several directions in what appeared to be a coordinated attack. Some came from the north...while the majority originated from the southeast section" of city, a diplomat said.

Since its invasion in December 1979 to prop up the pro-Moscow Kabul government the Soviets have built up their forces to an estimated 105,000 for the inconclusive war against 100,000 to 200,000 anti-Communist insurgents.

Giving details of the attack, the diplomats said nine rockets or mortars rained on the Microrayon residential neighborhood, home of most Soviet officials in Kabul.

Another three projectiles landed near the Afghan secret service headquarters opposite the U.S. embassy while a fourth rocket came down just behind the American Missions' sports field.

Three others hit the Radio Kabul compound, one smashed into the Iraqi Embassy "removing a chimney stack" while another struck the house of a Japanese diplomat, causing damage to the ground floor. The diplomat escaped injury.

Other projectiles landed near the house of the French Vice Consul, "sending large chunks of shrapnel into the building, while one struck the home of a Bulgarian diplomat. The Pakistani diplomatic residence had a near miss, the sources said.

"Several Afghan houses were damaged by shrapnel," a diplomat said.

"Reports from eyewitnesses said several fires broke out. Fire engines were escorted to the scene by armored vehicles."

Soviet and Afghan government forces, apparently caught by surprise, were only able to mount a counter attack "20 minutes after the barrage ended with artillery and heavy machine gun fire that continued for nearly two hours."

CSO: 4600/127

MESSAGE TO UN REITERATES SUPPORT FOR NAMIBIA

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 31 Oct 84 p 3

[Text] President Lt. Gen H. M. Ershad on Monday reiterated Bangladesh's total and unstinted support with the people of Namibia in their just and legitimate struggle for freedom and national independence under the leadership of SWAPO, reports BSS.

In a message to the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia on the occasion of observance of the 'week of solidarity', the President commanded the valiant people of Namibia and paid tributes to the courage and determination that they have demonstrated throughout the struggle.

President Ershad said that Bangladesh's position on the question of Namibia had been firm, consistent and unequivocal and it had irrevocably committed to support the oppressed people around the world who are waging a just struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism. He said that since the joining the membership of the U.N. Council for Namibia, Bangladesh had always attached highest degree of priority to uphold the just cause of the oppressed people of Namibia.

The president described SWAPO as the true and authentic representative of the people of Namibia and said the tragedy of Namibia is a tragedy for mankind.

CSO: 4600/1149

ERSHAD ON DEVELOPMENTS IN CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 31 Oct 84 p 1

[Text] Khagrachari, Oct. 30:--The President and Chief Martial Law Administrator, Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad today reiterated the determination of his Government to ensure balanced development of all the areas of the country, reports BSS.

Addressing a huge public meeting near the newly built Chengi bridge here, the President said the present Government had already undertaken various development programmes for achieving overall development of all the parts, specially in the less developed areas.

He referred to the steps taken up for the development of the Chittagong Hill Tract area during the last two and half years and said a Taka 263 crore Special Five Year Plan had been taken from the current fiscal year for the development of the area.

President Ershad said the Government had allocated Taka 64 crore for the current year to undertake development activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area of which Taka 32 crore was earmarked for the construction of roads, Taka 3 crore for telecommunications, Taka 6 crore for power, Taka 4 crore for water, Taka 3 crore for education, Taka 4 crore for agriculture, Taka 1 crore for fisheries and livestock Taka 7 crore for Jhumia rehabilitation Taka 2 crore for social welfare and Taka 2 crore for health.

Besides, he said a 100 bed hospital was being constructioned in Rangamati while the Khagrachari Sadar Hospital was being made a 50 bed hospital. New schools and colleges were being set up and roads constructed for the benefit of the people of the area he added.

The President said he was happy that a large number of misguided youths in the Chittagong Hill Tracts had returned to normal life following his call last year. They had been rehabilitated in normal life and now working shoulder to shoulder with their brethren living in other areas to build the country, he added.

President Ershad called upon the remaining misguided youths in the Chittagong Hill Tracts who were yet to return to normal life to join the mainstream to

free their country from want and poverty by building it on a sound economic footing. On their return to normal life; they would be rehabilitated in the society he added.

He said peace and discipline were the two main pre-requisites for attaining unhindered development. He called upon all sections to maintain peace and discipline in the society for uninterrupted production in fields and factories to achieve self-reliance in every sphere of national life.

The President pointed out that the country had been facing manifold problems like unbridled growth of population, illiteracy and disease and said: 'We can only overcome these problems if we can combine our man and land together to produce more for generating resources to be utilised for improving the condition of the commonman.'

CSO: 4600/1148

THIRD 5-YEAR PLAN ON 'GENERAL EQUILIBRIUM' MODEL

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 31 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Article by Syed Badiuzzaman]

[Text] The Planning Commission is making a move to adopt a sophisticated model for the Third Five-Year Plan scheduled to be launched from the next financial year, replacing the conventional pattern.

Both the First and the Second Five Year Plans of the country were formulated on the basis of the input-output model. But for the Third Five-Year Plan, the Planning Commission is making an attempt to switch over from that pattern to a new model styled "general equilibrium."

In fact, the general equilibrium model is being tried to be adopted by the planners in accordance with and expansion of the guidelines of the "Bangladesh Agricultural Model" (BAM) earlier prepared by the experts from the Netherlands for the development of country's agriculture.

Given by a food research organisation of the Netherlands, originally this model (BAM) aimed at increasing the foodgrains production in Bangladesh and bringing solution to the related problems in the food sector. Now the Planning Commission is contemplating expansion of this model for the whole economy.

In order to accomplish this task, the Commission has appointed two local consultants along with the original architects of this model from the Netherlands. Preliminary work on preparation of the model is in progress. It is learnt from the relevant sources.

This move of the Planning Commission to adopt new model recently came under severe criticism by the eminent economists and experts who attacked the very foundation of the plan saying "it is unsuitable for Bangladesh against the backdrop of the prevailing economic factors".

The attack came at a closed door seminar held on the Third Five-Year Plan under the auspices of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) and the Planning Commission at the BIDS library hall Sunday afternoon. The seminar was attended by the economists, planners and the consultants and architects of the model.

The entire technical aspects of the new model and various policy implications vis-a-vis the existing realities in Bangladesh came up for discussion at the seminar that lasted about two hours.

The planners and architects of the model, however, defended it saying that it bare a large number of important policy implications which, according to them, would produce positive results and leave far-reaching effects on the national economy.

The seminar was presided over by Prof Rehman Sobhao, chairman, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies and participated, among others, by former Planning Minister Dr Fashjuddin Mahtab, Member, Planning Commission Dr. Shahadatullah, Mr. Keyzer, the Dutch consultant and the team leader, Mr. Mustafa Mujeree and Mr Salahuddin, local consultants and Dr. Naimuddin of BIDS.

CSO: 4600/1149

EVALUATION UNIT FINDS UNCOMPLETED PLAN PROJECTS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 31 Oct 84 p 1

[Text] The Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Cell of the Planning Commission found 12 development projects as completed still unfinished. Last year, 30 such projects were detected and action against the people who supplied wrong information was also suggested.

The cell regretted that nothing had so far been done to correct the irregularities.

An official document of the cell said the physical achievement during the first four years of the Second Five Year Plan has been estimated at 61 per cent with an investment of 89 per cent of the total allocation.

A total of 883 development projects were earmarked for completion during the first four years of the plan out of which only 541 projects have been completed.

The document was placed before a high level meeting of the Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and heads of the autonomous organisations at the auditorium of the Planning Commission on Tuesday. The meeting was presided over by Planning Minister Dr. A. Majeed Khan. It discussed difficulties in implementing the projects and also the decisions of the executive committee of the National Economic Council.

The report of the Monitoring Cell showed the total allocations during the four years at Taka 11 795 crore and the expenditure at Taka 10.449 crore (89 per cent). The percentage of expenditure in local currency has been shown at 97 per cent and that of the foreign exchange at 79 per cent.

The report has also identified difficulties in delaying the implementation of the development projects which include allocation of inadequate funds scarcity of funds scarcity of foreign currency release of lesser funds compared to allocations delayed release of funds non-sanctioning of the projects, delay in lining up aid delay in signing agreements with the donors and shortage of efficient officers, etc.

CSO: 4600/1148

GANDHI DEATH DANGER TO REGIONAL STABILITY

Dhaka HOLIDAY in English 2 Nov 84 p 1

[Article by N. M. Harun]

[Text] On Wednesday morning in New Delhi the dark forces of destabilisation claimed yet another victim--this time one of the biggest prizes the contemporary world has. The Indian Prime Ministers, Mrs. Indira Gandhi fell to assassins' bullets. The bullets that ripped her body threw India into a vortex of uncertainties, raising the fear that maybe the last nail in the coffin of political stability of the region is being forged.

The tragic end of Mrs. Gandhi symbolises the irony of the lopsided nation-building efforts of the former colonial countries. The heroic anti-colonial movement of the peoples of the former British colony of India was not destined to reach its natural culmination: the issue of nationalities was not decided, the basis of statehood was not established, an appropriate political philosophy--capitalist or socialist--was not found. The movement lost its direction in the romantic all-India nationalism of Congress and the anachronistic two-nation theory of the Muslim League, and ended in the artificial creation of the two states of India and Pakistan on the basis of the two-nation theory.

India has since 1974 remained a unique experiment in the fusion of capitalism and socialism in a multi-national bourgeois unitary state--the Indian way of statehood. How and in which way the various nationalities of India will solve their nationalities questions within a bourgeois framework is yet to be seen. Indian politics is still a continuation of the euphoric anti-colonial movement. The short interregnum of the Janata rule demonstrated how much fluid is Indian politics. All-India political alternatives to the Congress have not emerged. And the perpetuation of the rule of one party in a democracy is not possible. Then remains the all-India bureaucracy--civil and military--serving an all-India bourgeois economic system. It is yet to be tested whether these can serve as props of an all-India unitary state.

Mrs. Gandhi sacrificed her life at the altar of this so-called Indian way of statehood. She personified the unitary India--and that was too big a role for a mortal.

Mrs. Gandhi was thus her own undoing. She was obsessed with the India of her father's 'Discovery of India.' In that quest she excelled all her predecessors--she led India to a position of 'regional power.' She was Aurangzeb of modern India. Mediaeval India rose to its zenith under Aurangzeb and so is the case of modern India under Mrs. Gandhi. Aurangzeb failed to politically tackle the centrifugal tendencies of his India and Mrs. Gandhi similarly failed to meet the challenge of the same tendencies--albeit in a more aggravated form--of her India.

But Mrs. Gandhi rose above a conventional leader of India and made a tentative tryst with history when in 1971 she came out boldly in support of the people of the then East Pakistan in their struggle to carve out a nation-state--Bangladesh--from the chaos of the other multi-national offspring of British India--Pakistan.

India without Mrs. Gandhi will not remain the same India. And because of the special position of India in the region, the Third World and the world, the balance of power at all these levels will naturally get a jolt. The successors of Mrs. Gandhi now face the most crucial test of absorbing the shock of her assassination.

Bangladesh

The fallout of Indian tragedy will understandably affect the politics of Bangladesh in more than one ways. Given the history of the subcontinent--and particularly the chequered history of independent Bangladesh--this point does not need any elaboration.

Against the backdrop of a nightmarish apprehension of a destabilised India, the leadership of Bangladesh--both in the government and the opposition--owes it to the people to find out ways and means of relative political stability.

CSO: 4600/1150

PAPERS REPORT, COMMENT ON REAGAN REELECTION

Hopes for Better Relations

Madras THE HINDU in English 8 Nov 84 p 9

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text] NEW DELHI, Nov. 7--The re-election of the U.S. President Mr. Reagan with one of the biggest landslide victories in U.S. history has not generated any great excitement in Delhi because it was generally assumed that he was all set to get a second term.

But the ease with which he has romped home with such a massive margin has made his critics in India more conscious of Mr. Reagan's increased international stature and the power that goes with it.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. George Shultz, who headed the high-power U.S. delegation to Indira Gandhi's funeral, held out the hope that the Reagan Administration would try to improve its relationship with India by striving for a better balance in its involvement in the sub-continent without in any way weakening its links with Pakistan.

Despite the continuity of the present power structure in Washington following Mr. Reagan's re-election, the President and his advisers would probably wait till the parliamentary poll in India to take a close look at the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's policies and postures, if he secures a mandate of his own by availing himself of the great surge of sympathy for him in the wake of his mother's assassmination, before making any significant moves for better Indo-American relations. But the point that is being stressed here is that the initiative for eliminating the recurring frictions between India and the U.S. really rests with Washington.

Ties with Pakistan: It is for the Reagan Administration to come forward with some well-meaning gestures like halting the arms race in the sub-continent by curtailing its military aid to Pakistan. At no stage has India suggested that the U.S. should not have good relations with Pakistan, since it has only been stressing that the focus should shift from military aid to economic assistance.

A stable and prosperous Pakistan, the U.S. has been told several times, would not pose a threat to India, like a militarily strong but politically weak one bent on pursuing a confrontationist policy to condition the reflexes of its people with the bogey of an Indian threat. So the U.S. has to steer a middle course to disengage itself from its involvement in these Indo-Pakistan fixations, before taking any positive steps to rationalise its relations with both of them.

The congratulatory messages sent by the President, Mr. Zail Singh, and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, to Mr. Reagan on his re-election have been carefully worded to indicate India's desire for better understanding with the U.S. without giving any misleading impression that the new Government in India is inclined to tilt towards Washington. All possible care has been taken to avoid giving Moscow any cause for concern about the basic foreign policy postulates of the new Government.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi said in his message to Mr. Reagan: 'On behalf of the Government and people of India as well as on my own, I extend our warm greetings and felicitations on your re-election as President. May the American people achieve still greater successes and progress under your leadership.'

'The friendly relations between our two countries as largest democracies are firmly rooted in shared ideas and aspirations for peace and development. I am confident that the mutually beneficial cooperation between our peoples will be further strengthened and expanded in the years ahead'.

Soviet analysis: The Soviet embassy and other diplomatic missions of the socialist countries are carefully analysing the wording of this message to discern whether there is any new slant in it. There was a scramble by their representatives to get hold of it after the External Affairs Ministry released the text this afternoon.

An interesting inter-related development that caused some excitement in diplomatic circles here was the reported disinclination of the Soviet Government to include the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Andrei Gromyko, in the delegation headed by the Soviet Prime Minister Mr. Nikolai Tikhonov, for Indira Gandhi's funeral despite an Indian suggestion to this effect. The foreign policy advisers of the new Prime Minister felt that it would be a good idea if a senior Soviet leader like Mr. Gromyko who had been closely associated for the last three decades with the development of Indo-Soviet relations had an early opportunity to meet Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.

For reasons best known to itself, the Soviet Union did not respond to this hint from the Indian side. It is another matter whether the Government of India was well advised in making this suggestion without leaving the matter entirely to Soviet discretion.

'Depressing' Stand on Third World Aid

Madras THE HINDU in English 8 Nov 84 p 8

[Editorial]

[Text] WHETHER OR NOT the rest of the world will welcome it, the American electorate has overwhelmingly opted for one more term of Reaganism. If in 1980 Mr. Ronald Reagan won largely on a negative vote against the Carter Administration, this time he has the country's enthusiastic approval in what was as much a referendum on his conservative policies at home and abroad as a test of his personal popularity. The Democratic challenger, Mr. Walter Mondale, running far behind in the public opinion polls, gambled with his choice of Mrs. Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate--thereby opening the door to women candidates for high office--and launched a fierce attack on Mr. Reagan's personal abilities, calling him the worst informed and most isolated President, though in the closing stages he switched the focus to issues of the economy and the poor. But in the face of the President's personal standing and the economic recovery that was held out as evidence that the policies of the Administration were working, the Democratic campaign could not make much headway. Mr. Reagan's strong showing in the industrial north-east, in the south and among young voters is a measure of the uniform and widespread appeal of his line on "getting the government off the backs of people" and "keeping America strong."

In Mr. Reagan's second term, the economy which has now been his most valuable ally may turn out to be the biggest challenge. Because of both tax cuts and unrestrained defence spending, the budget deficit has reached \$175 billions and the trade gap too is at an unsustainable level. While the inflation is down to 5 per cent, the interest rates are abnormally high, imposing a heavy burden on American industry and borrowers as well as the rest of the world. The Reagan Administration expects the interest rates to fall and counts on the spread of recovery more evenly in Europe to facilitate an expansion of American exports. But the promise of painlessly reducing the budget deficit without raising taxes is one that it will find very difficult to keep; there are already forcecasts that Mr. Reagan will soon be forced to increase taxes. The inner cities and the older industrial areas (and elderly persons) are still in some distress and the expectation that the recovery would take care of them automatically has not materialised, particularly in the teeth of the cuts in social spending. In the area of arms control, Mr. Reagan's strategy of building up military strength to get the Soviet Union to agree to its terms on arms reduction has so far not made the desired impact. The show of strength in introducing Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe drove Moscow away from the negotiating table and the plan for a "Star Wars" anti-missile defence system in space has caused considerable unease in the rest of the world. More recently, Mr. Reagan seems to have taken up arms control and relations with the Soviet Union in greater seriousness--witness his meeting with the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Gromyko--and on election eve spoke of a summit with the Soviet leaders. It remains to be seen if he would follow up on these openings or would continue on his militaristic course. For the Third World, the Reagan Administration's less than enthusiastic support for the World Bank and the

International Development Association, the shift to bilateralism and the deflection of suggestions for increased aid with the claim that the U.S. recovery and its open market would benefit the LDCs more than aid and with sermons on the virtues of self-help and the magic of the marketplace have all combined to create a highly depressing environment. There is, of course, a view that Mr. Reagan will soften his policies, but there has been little indication to sustain it during the last few months.

U.S. Makes 'Spectacular Comeback'

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Nov 84 p 8

[Editorial]

[Text]

The outcome was not in doubt at any stage. Mr. Reagan's re-election was assured from the very start. Not only was he the incumbent of that great office, his record had been pretty impressive in the eyes of a vast majority of the American people. The economy had done well in four essential aspects. While the rates of inflation and taxes were down, production and employment were up. Mr. Reagan also represented the new mood among the youth who, unlike in the past, now emphasise the importance of traditional values such as hard work and self-reliance. And he had managed to restore the American peoples' self-respect and pride in their country. Under him they ceased thinking of the United States as a flabby giant who could be pushed around. The more discerning Americans entertained certain anxieties. They feared that the enormous trade and budget deficits and high interest rates would cumulatively lead to another recession and that the new nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union would aggravate the danger of a holocaust. But these dangers lay in the future and did not bother the white voter. The blacks and the ethnics, with the exception of the Irish and Polish Americans who have done well in recent times, were for the Democratic candidate, Mr. Mondale, but that could not possibly become a winning alliance.

Regardless of the outcome, however, the election once again focusses attention on certain basic issues. As always the process has been extremely costly, cumbersome and time-consuming; it has lasted almost a whole year and all but paralysed the 'administration in that period. As often before, it has been more a test of the contestants' physical stamina and manipulative skills than of their capacity to address themselves to the tasks which go (or more appropriately should go) with the most awesome office in the world. And, as in the last two and a half decades, television has seen to it that the image matters more than the substance. Not for nothing has there been so much talk of pre-packaging the President. Not for nothing do so many people regard and call the TV set the idiot box.

Not only the American electoral system but the administrative system as well has once again come in for a

great deal of criticism both at home and abroad. Imagine a host of senior officials, not just cabinet members, coming in with a President, often with no experience of government or diplomacy or whatever task is assigned to them, and going out with him, often collecting official papers as if to wipe the slate clean. Also imagine novices who happened to get on to the right gravy train at the right time managing not only the affairs of the most powerful country ever in the world but also presiding over the destiny of humankind. No, the problem is not limited to the election of a playboy, or a megalomaniac, or a paranoid, or a self-righteous bungler, or a ham actor to the Presidency; it extends to the way the United States is governed. The system, most experts, Americans as well as Europeans, are convinced, is antiquated if it was ever appropriate to the requirements of a great nation.

The Americans are stuck with the system. They are welcome to be stuck with it. But America affects us all as no other country. Washington has not succeeded in establishing a *Pax Americana* in the imperial sense. But a *Pax Americana* of a different, perhaps subtler, kind does exist. The United States commands the most powerful military machine in the world. Perhaps even more significantly, on it depends the health or ill-health of other economies, including those of industrial giants such as Japan, West Germany and indeed the Soviet Union. The relationship is not of equality. The West German chancellor, the French president and the British prime minister resent that their countries are being beggared by the flight of capital into the United States on account of its high interest rates. But there is precious little they can do about it. They can either grin and bear or scowl and bear, but bear they have to.

No, the American Century has not turned out to be as brief as many of us thought in the seventies. It did not end in ignominy — in the jungles of Vietnam — in the late sixties. It continues. The United States has made a spectacular comeback and again it sees itself as the world's gendarme. President Reagan represents that mood.

India Has Reason To Fear

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 9 Nov 84 p 4

[Editorial]

[Text]

In his victory speech Mr Ronald Reagan has spoken of his second-term mandate as an expression of national approval of the policies he has pursued in his first term. His decisive triumph over the ill-starred Democratic duo no doubt points to such a conclusion. For the rest of the world, however, it opens an awesome prospect. Mr Reagan's Presidency, unless his second term modifies the record of his first four years in the White House, will go down in history as the most benighted Presidency in America's recent history. He has in his first term attempted to reverse a great deal the US achieved in social welfare in the years after the Great Depres-

sion. These reforms, now whittled down, were necessary to allay the evil effects of what was until then a roisterously "free" economy run solely for profit. The reversal he has sought in the economy and domestic reforms is in line with his foreign policy which is irresponsible to the point of being criminal. Interventionism and bellicosity have been the main features of his foreign policy and these are most likely to be accentuated by his new triumph. Even during the elections he sent warships into the territorial waters of Nicaragua to investigate the allegation, which Managua has flatly denied, that a Soviet freighter was unloading new Mig aircraft in a Nicaraguan port.

Mr Reagan has won by default — taking advantage of the disarray among his adversaries and the fears he has stimulated in US society by his brinkmanship. The Democrats could not even rally their traditional adherents to their side this time. Even the central trade unions' backing did not obtain for Democratic Presidential candidate Walter Mondale the votes of a majority of organised workers. His running-mate, Ms Geraldine Ferraro, could not take away from Mr Reagan women or Italians, the two sections she was wooing. The Democrats failed not merely as a party but also in a wider sense. In policy they have not distanced themselves from the worst features of Reaganism. Clearly, if the differences concern the cosmetics the rival candidates used for TV appearances and nothing else — Mr Mondale blamed his poor TV image for his defeat and Mr Reagan's virtuosity on the screen as a former actor — then there is no reason why voters should want Mr Mondale as President to implement what is in essentials Mr Reagan's policies. Reaganism, they would be right to conclude, is best implemented by Mr Reagan himself.

Like Nicaragua, many developing nations, India among them, have reasons to fear Mr Reagan's second term. The animus his administration has displayed towards this country may well become more blatant in the period ahead. The hard-nosed operatives who are his advisers may be tempted to take advantage of the transition in India and the disappearance from the scene of Indira Gandhi whose personal authority in the world and clear voice acted on occasions as a restraint on US interventionism. On questions of arms limitation talk with the Soviet Union, and peace, there may be no or little progress. Unless the President, with no third term in view, changes course now, the world will fear his second inauguration in January next year as a setback to the hopes for relaxation in international relations and a better deal for the Third World countries.

CSO: 4600/1134

JAGIT SINGH CHOHAN: EVERY SIKH WANTS KHALISTAN

West Berlin TAGESZEITUNG in German 15 Nov 84 p 8

[Interview with president of Sikh exile government, Jagit Singh Chohan, in London; interview conducted by Rolf Paasch, date not indicated]

[Text] The Sikh government in exile. The government in exile for an independent Sikh-state Khalistan was proclaimed in Amritsar on 15 June 1980; i.e., 4 years before the attack on the Golden Temple by Indian troops. Its president Jagit Singh Chohan resides in the so-called Khalistan House in Basewater, which is one of the better residential areas in London. Until now it was quite uncertain to what extent Chohan's group was being backed from the outside. Lately, however, there have been increasing signs that Pakistan is not behind the militant Sikhs (as claimed by the Indian Government), but that close connections exist between Chohan and the ultra-conservative U.S. Senator Jesse Helms (who, after his election victory, will possibly assume the chairmanship of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee). According to the English daily newspaper THE GUARDIAN, there are also connections between the Sikh paper KHALISTAN NEWS and a newspaper issued by the South African Embassy.

taz: Mrs Gandhi is dead. What do you think about the murder of your political enemy?

Dr. Chohan: I would not describe her as a political enemy. I was very sad about what happened but it did not surprise me. I had accurately predicted it here in this room on 13 June 1984. At that time nobody believed me; they even laughed at me when I told them about the history of the Sikhs: i.e., that among the Sikhs whoever committed sacrilege against the holy temple would not stay alive for very long.

taz: Do you consider Mrs. Gandhi's murder a political success?

Dr. Chohan: This has nothing to do with politics. It was a purely religious matter, and anyone who commits an action similar to the one committed by Mrs Gandhi will meet the same fate. After she had the temple at Amritsar evacuated, she had to anticipate death every moment. I do not understand why it took so long.

taz: ~~How do you feel about the~~ hundreds of Sikhs who had to pay for the consequences of the assassination?

Dr. Chohan: The Hindus, through such retaliatory measures, only magnify their sins, and this will have consequences. The Sikhs are a very peaceful people. Sikhs do not act first, they only react. You have now seen the reaction to the incident in the Golden Temple; you will still see the reaction to this new massacre unless the events take a turn toward a peaceful solution. I hope that peace will occur, I am against any kind of violence. I am a pacifist myself; I am a physician trained to save lives, not to destroy them. I do not believe in political executions or in any kind of terrorism. However, once things have gone so far, then you will reap what you have sown.

taz: Let us talk about Khalistan. Do you expect that, after the proclamation of an independent Khalistan, all the Sikhs who live in the other Indian regions will emigrate there?

Dr. Chohan: Sikhs believe in brotherhood; it should not be a community for Sikhs only. If somebody is against brotherhood, then he is not a Sikh. Our belief demands that we have love and sympathy for all mankind. We do not pray "Lord be with me," but "Be with all mankind, even with our enemies." Therefore, all religions are welcome in the Golden Temple, not only the Sikh religion.

My recommendation to all Sikhs, nevertheless, is that it is high time to begin a peaceful resettlement in the Punjab. Because, after all that has happened, the approximately 5 million Hindus who are living there are not safe any more. Neither what is happening in Delhi now nor what took place in March or August 1947 should be allowed to happen again [Editor's Note: i.e., the Hindu and Moslem massacres before the sub-continent was divided into India and Pakistan].

taz: Why weren't Mrs Gandhi's concessions in the Punjab sufficient?

Dr. Chohan: We want our independent nation; we want to maintain our sovereignty. We have already been recognized by the British as a third nation (along with India and Pakistan). We could have set up Khalistan in 1947 without any blood shed. The Hindu leaders took advantage of our own political naivete. They knew that we were simple farmers and soldiers, and at that time they flattered us by saying: "How can we defend India without you? Come and live with us!" If you had been present at the massacre at Amritsar (which took place without coverage by the foreign press), you would not ask why the status quo is intolerable to us.

taz: What kind of an economic system would this future Khalistan have?

Dr. Chohan: We favor a mixed economy. We are an agrarian country; most of the farmers own only little land. Instead of collectivizing farming, as the communists would advocate, we are in favor of working together (forming a cooperative). A happy medium as far as factories are concerned, for instance. However, we are against nationalization. Denationalization and free enterprise are going to be the fundamental principles of Khalistan.

taz: What would your foreign policies be like, especially toward the two superpowers?

Dr. Chohan: We would like to remain neutral and make our country an Asian showplace to demonstrate how we can overcome poverty and unemployment with hard work. If you are asking me about our philosophy, one thing is sure--we are not going to join the communists.

taz: This does not seem to be too different from Mrs Ghandi's politics of freedom from alignment with major blocs.

Dr. Chohan: To the contrary. Mrs Ghandi joined forces with the Soviet Union, which was against the interests of the Indian population.

taz: What is your attitude toward Pakistan?

Dr. Chohan: We want to work together and live in peace with Pakistan as well as with India--with all our neighbors. We could create a Confederation of United States of Southern Asia; then there would be no more fear, no wars, and no arms build-up. Instead, we could concentrate on the economic problems, improve the infrastructure, and turn our country into a heaven--now it is a hell.

taz: The Indian Government has repeatedly accused you of being financially subsidized by Pakistan.

Dr. Chohan: This charge has political motivations: it is intended for the benefit of Hindu chauvinism. Pakistan does not back us, for the simple reason that in the past we have waged two wars against them on India's side. In the long term, we can think of collaboration because we are much closer culturally and religiously. The separation of the Punjab didn't take place until the 17th and 18th century.

taz: What are your relations with the Akali Dal Party?

Dr. Chohan: All Sikhs form a united front; there is no Akali Dal or Anti-Akali Dal....

taz: But there are different factions among the Sikhs?

Dr. Chohan: Forget the talk of extremists and moderates; every Sikh wants Khalistan and nothing else. Even the people in Delhi who had been against Khalistan in the past support us now. I am not exaggerating when I say that 98 percent of the Sikhs are for an independent Khalistan.

taz: I spoke to several Sikhs [in Southall, London] on the day of Mrs Ghandi's funeral. Certainly not all of them were in favor of an independent Khalistan. There was some criticism against "extremists".

Dr. Chohan: You might have met some who are still supporting the Congress Party. Moreover, the Communists are strongly represented in Southall. They only look like Sikhs.

taz: In reading the ASIAN TIMES one gets a completely different impression of the various currents among the Sikhs.

Dr. Chohan: Nothing is static; everything is dialectic and in motion. We received our first support on 6 June; by 23 June, we already had 80 percent support; and now there is 90 percent (support). This happens completely automatically. It's not to my credit. Events have shown the Sikhs that there is no other way for survival than the establishment of a sovereign state.

taz: Do you expect a greater flexibility with regard to the Punjab from the new president Rajiv Ghandi than from his mother?

Dr. Chohan: Politically he is still very immature. He understands the complexities of India far less than his mother did. For this reason he will be under even greater Soviet influence. They are all around him already. I know his advisors; the Soviets will soon control the government. The Russians did not march into Afghanistan for their entertainment. They combined it with a purpose and the objective is India with its ports on the Indian Ocean and on the Arabian Sea. From there they can threaten the Middle East: the traditional sea-route between East and West.

taz: Do you hope for support from the U.S.? Are there contacts between yourself and the U.S. Government?

Dr. Chohan: I have some very good friends in the United States with whom I can talk and who agree with me....

taz: Are they Republicans?

Dr. Chohan: Republicans as well as Democrats who understand India and with whom I have often spoken. They know that there is no future for a central power in this monolithic India. And if Rajiv Gandhi or the Hindu-chauvinists believe that they can keep India together by force, then they cherish false hopes. They must change their ideas and recognize the need for decentralization of India (perhaps in the form of the United States of India or of Southern Asia), for the various nations to decide for themselves what they want in terms of language, culture, and economics, and thereby bring a new stability to the government. This way we will be able to live together.

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RETIRED SIKH GENERAL ON HINDU VIOLENCE AGAINST SIKHS

Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 19 Nov 84 pp 168-175

[Interview with Gen Jagjit Singh Arora (Ret) conducted by SPIEGEL editors Siegfried Kogelfranz and Sri Prakash Sinha at Gen Arora's residence in New Delhi; date of interview not indicated: "We Are Facing Grave Dangers"]

[Text] Jagjit Singh Arora is one of the most prominent Sikhs in India. Arora, a 67 year-old retired lieutenant general, forced an opposing army of 100,000 to capitulate in East Pakistan in 1961, thereby paving the way for the new state of Bangladesh. For this exploit, he received the highest Indian decoration. An accomplished parachutist, the hero of Bangladesh is respected by all of India's 14.2 million Sikhs as distinct from politicians such as President Zail Singh—a fact the government took advantage of. Following the assassination of Indira Gandhi, while the massacres of Sikhs by Hindus were going on, the government turned to the general for help on several occasions. Arora was named vice president of a 39-member committee to aid the tens of thousands of victims of the mob violence.

[Question] General, from the window of your house we can see a Sikh temple that has been destroyed and Sikh houses that were burned to the ground. During the days following the assassination of Indira Gandhi by two members of your faith, Sikhs were humiliated, tortured and murdered and their houses and shops were looted. As a Sikh, how does one feel in India today?

[Answer] The mob not only made for my neighbors; it also picked my house as a target. We were warned ahead of time and my wife had already taken some of our valuables and memorabilia to a Hindu neighbor for safekeeping.

[Question] But your house was not damaged.

[Answer] Luckily, an army colonel got here ahead of the mob. He posted a few soldiers in front of our villa and so we were left unscathed. The whole business was planned, of course. To be sure, the deplorable assassination of the prime minister was the immediate cause of indignation over the Sikhs...

[Question] ...which was heightened, the Hindus say, by some Sikhs who went so far as to celebrate the death of Indira Gandhi by distributing candy to passersby for example.

[Answer] Those are malicious, damned rumors. It was said of a family here in our colony that the champagne corks were popping at their house after the assassination. I know these people very well; I went to school with one of them. Not a single one of them has ever touched a drop of alcohol. These malicious rumors were part of a plan to incite the population against the Sikhs and to sow distrust between Hindus and Sikhs.

[Question] Who might have had an interest in doing that ?

[Answer] If an event such as the assassination could lead to the attempt to liquidate all the Sikhs in India outside the Punjab, then that must have been planned far in advance. The houses which were to be looted and burned to the ground were all carefully marked in advance. I looked into all of that in great detail. In the absence of a plan it would not be possible, for instance, that not a single neighboring house—not belonging to a Sikh—was damaged.

[Question] A mob looting on the spur of the moment does not make such fine distinctions—is that what you are saying ?

[Answer] Exactly. And for another thing, the authorities did absolutely nothing to put an end to the violence. I am deeply shocked by the behavior of the police which—with very few exceptions—did nothing anywhere in Delhi to protect people or their property.

[Question] Do you mean to imply that that was also part of the plan ? Witnesses all agreed that the police acted as though they had been told not to act.

[Answer] The police obviously felt sure they were on the right side, if they did nothing and that they would wind up on the wrong side politically, if they as much as performed their duty.

[Question] Many of the victims of the violence told us that they gave the police the names of the culprits most of whom were functionaries of the ruling Congress Party or of its youth wing but that nothing was done as a result.

[Answer] Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi himself has promised that the investigations would be conducted free of political influence or considerations and I hope to God that this really happens because otherwise I do not know how we will ever have any trust in this country at all.

[Question] Your contention that the murder of the Sikhs was planned in advance is a serious charge. Do you really believe it is true ?

[Answer] Yes. They only waited for an opportunity and this was the opportunity to enrage the masses. As Mrs. Gandhi's body was being brought from her house to the former residence of her father, Nehru, the television showed people demanding "blood for blood." That did surprise me because it is not the way our television and radio usually report such events.

[Question] You think it was their aim to excite the masses in this manner ?

[Answer] Well, either there was a lack of feeling for what they were showing or it was their stated aim. But there is one more thing. You will surely have read about the fact that a Congress deputy to Parliament asked the police to release 70 people who had been arrested for acts of violence and looting. That can only mean that he himself was involved in the affair and that these were his own constituents who would not vote for him again, if he did not get them released.

[Question] If that were true, how could any Sikh have any faith in the government again ?

[Answer] In that connection, let me cite another aspect—a positive one—of these tragic events. In our colony and in most of the other areas concerned there was not a single instance in which a Hindu neighbor did any harm to any of his Sikh neighbors. Quite the contrary: almost everywhere the Hindu neighbors helped us—frequently at great risk to themselves. Across from my house, there is a small Hindu gentleman living who fought for us like a tiger and risked his life against the raging mob. I am sure he drew the lasting enmity of those politicians upon himself who now are in a rage about not having been able to finish the job.

[Question] Are you saying that the majority of Hindus did not stand behind those who were taking revenge on the Sikhs ?

[Answer] Yes, exactly. The unrest was politically motivated; the culprits were professionals thugs; criminal riffraff who were instigated by people with political interests.

[Question] Could it possibly in the interest of any political party or the government, for that matter, to infuriate the entire Sikh community—those very Sikhs who are represented in such disproportionate numbers in the army, the police and the administration; who are viewed as the economically most active segment of the Indian population and are running India's granary ? After all, to put the existence of the

Sikhs in question is tantamount to placing India's democratic system, its economy, even the country as a whole in jeopardy.

[Answer] I am glad to hear you say that. I have been saying so for 2 years and so have my friends. We have said so to the government in writing. But unfortunately political life in India has long since reached such a pass that winning the next election outweighs everything else in importance. It is more important than stability or even the very existence of the country. To a large extent, politics has passed into the hands of asocial or even criminal elements. Money and muscle rule. Take a look sometime at the regional assemblies in some of the states of the Indian Union! You would be surprised how many of the members have a proven criminal past.

[Question] Churchill once called this the "negative selection of democracy."

[Answer] I am afraid that democracy is being totally abused by people here in India who have no social conscience and who are bereft of humanity.

~~They are maliciously destroying the community in which Hindus and Sikhs have peacefully lived side by side for hundreds of years. If the government is not in a position to make sure that something like this will never happen again, it will be impossible for the Sikhs to continue living in and with India.~~

As a loyal citizen of India, as one who loves this country, this is something I hate to say. But how can one live in a country in which one can no longer feel safe, in which one, in fact, is purposely humiliated—for instance when they intentionally attacked our temples, a truly devilish undertaking which was beyond my powers of comprehension.

[Question] You mean that all this was part of a grand scheme ?

[Answer] Yes—and that is why the Sikhs as well as the Indians as a whole must now make up their minds what they want. If the Indians want to drive the Sikhs out of India, then they force all the Sikhs to go to the Punjab—and that means the /Indians/ will be creating a separate state of Khalistan and not the Sikhs.

[Question] Nonetheless—the state of Khalistan is a Sikh idea.

[Answer] This Khalistan phantom was played up by means of propaganda. In order to incite anger against the Sikhs the media kept beating the drums about this nonsense until people finally started to believe it. Until the army action in Amritsar, I assure you that hardly two percent of the Sikhs were interested in Khalistan and after that action that figure climbed to perhaps 10 percent.

[Question] And now ?

[Answer] Now, after what has happened following the murder of Indira Gandhi, there are a great many more, of course. All of us who believed in India; who tied our fate to India feel that India—or at least the government of India—has forsaken us and totally failed us.

[Question] And now the Sikhs want to forsake India ?

[Answer] The Sikhs are not introverts who only look to themselves; otherwise they would not have made out as well throughout the world. Of course their efficiency, their diligence and their reputation arouse envy but it should never go as far as this. As I said before, I can only suppose that there was a sinister plan behind all this. But those who hatched it overlooked the fact that they were placing the unity of the whole country in jeopardy.

[Question] Or at least the cohesion of its most important institutions. You, as one of the most respected of Indian generals with 35 years of active service in the armed forces, are surely in a position to assess what the consequences of these events will be for the 160,000 Sikh soldiers and the 260,000 Sikh policemen. Will they adhere to the loyalty they swore to the government or will their loyalty be to their brothers, if the situation called for it ?

[Answer] Initially I thought that everything was lost; that there was no way back. But then our Hindu neighbors stuck to us so emphatically—in distinct contrast to the government and the machinations of certain political forces—that I began to take hope again. Our Hindu neighbors are helping us restore our temples—voluntarily and not because someone is ordering them to do so. So, I can still make out a small hope after all that we will not have to split this country in order to have India remain our country too. But if only the slightest thing happened now, everything would be lost.

[Question] Now the army has taken charge and apparently prevented the worst from happening. Tanks rolled through Delhi; in effect there was martial law even if it was not officially declared. As a general yourself who has fought on so many fronts—what do you have to say about this special role the army is playing in your own country ?

[Answer] I can only repeat that this underscores the failure of politics. It is a sad situation when the normal legal institutions go to the dogs and the army has to assume these functions which are alien to it more and more frequently.

[Question] In view of the obvious vacuum on the civilian side, hasn't the army already taken over power in a de facto sense ?

[Answer] I would not put it that way altogether. Officially, the army is only lending a helping hand to the civilian administration as before. But without a doubt the growing use of the army in this capacity serves to weaken both civilian authority as well as morale in the armed forces...

[Question] ...which might one day—as has happened in neighboring Pakistan and Bangladesh—get the idea that if they have to do all the dirty work anyway, they might just take over the shop entirely.

[Answer] I would agree with you in principle. Army coups take place wherever civilian authority has broken down. But in India Nehru laid the foundation for a solid administration and for a non-political army. Mrs. Gandhi was able to continue this in a way although she had to resort to the use of the armed forces inside the country more and more often. But she was a strong personality. It is hard to tell how that looks with the present leadership.

[Question] Perhaps all it takes is one ambitious general.

[Answer] You know, coups are usually made by colonels. Once they have reached the rank of general, they lose their bite and no longer wish to place their status at risk. But leaving that aside for the moment—India is such a large and diverse country that an army would not have an easy time of it taking over power and exercising it as distinct from a smaller country. I pray to God that such a situation will not arise in India because if there is one thing that still works in this country and serves to integrate it, it is the army. It could break apart, if it took over power.

[Question] If things go wrong in India, foreign countries are often made responsible for it. This time, too, there are those who believe there is a foreign conspiracy behind the assassination whose aim it was to destabilize India.

[Answer] I know nothing about that; but I have a better understanding of Sikh psychology than a non-Sikh. For me, there is no doubt about the fact that when the Sikhs suffer a trauma such as the attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar they do not rest until they have avenged it.

[Question] And that is why Indira Gandhi had to die ?

[Answer] She drew the vengeance upon herself because she was made solely responsible for what had happened. That is the way the Sikhs are. One may call them extremists even if in truth they are merely totally dedicated to an ideal or a cause. That is the way it has always been.

Following the events in Amritsar, we were afraid that this would happen—and we knew how much harm it would do to the Sikh community and to the country. But those who eventually carried out the assassination have a narrow view of things. They felt they had to do it—even if it took years.

[Question] And also apparently at the cost of their own lives.

[Answer] These people are prepared to die; that is a matter of their faith. I do not know whether any foreign forces were involved in the assassination. I only know that the Sikhs were quite prepared to carry it out by themselves.

[Question] Do you think that the big crisis has now passed ?

[Answer] I cannot believe that everything is all over already. When I see the deputies of the ruling Congress Party now trying to get the police to release their supporters, who took part in the criminal acts, then I can still see very grave dangers ahead of us.

[Question] In the Punjab where the Sikhs are in the majority—do you think there might still be a reaction to the massacres there ?

[Answer] I am surprised about the fact that there has not been a reaction as yet. Perhaps the reason for it is that the army is represented in such strength in the Punjab. You see, that is the difference. In Delhi, the army did not put in an appearance until after the crimes had taken place. It did not get here in time to prevent them; but in the Punjab it has until now acted as a successful preventive force.

[Question] General, we would like to thank you for this interview.

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